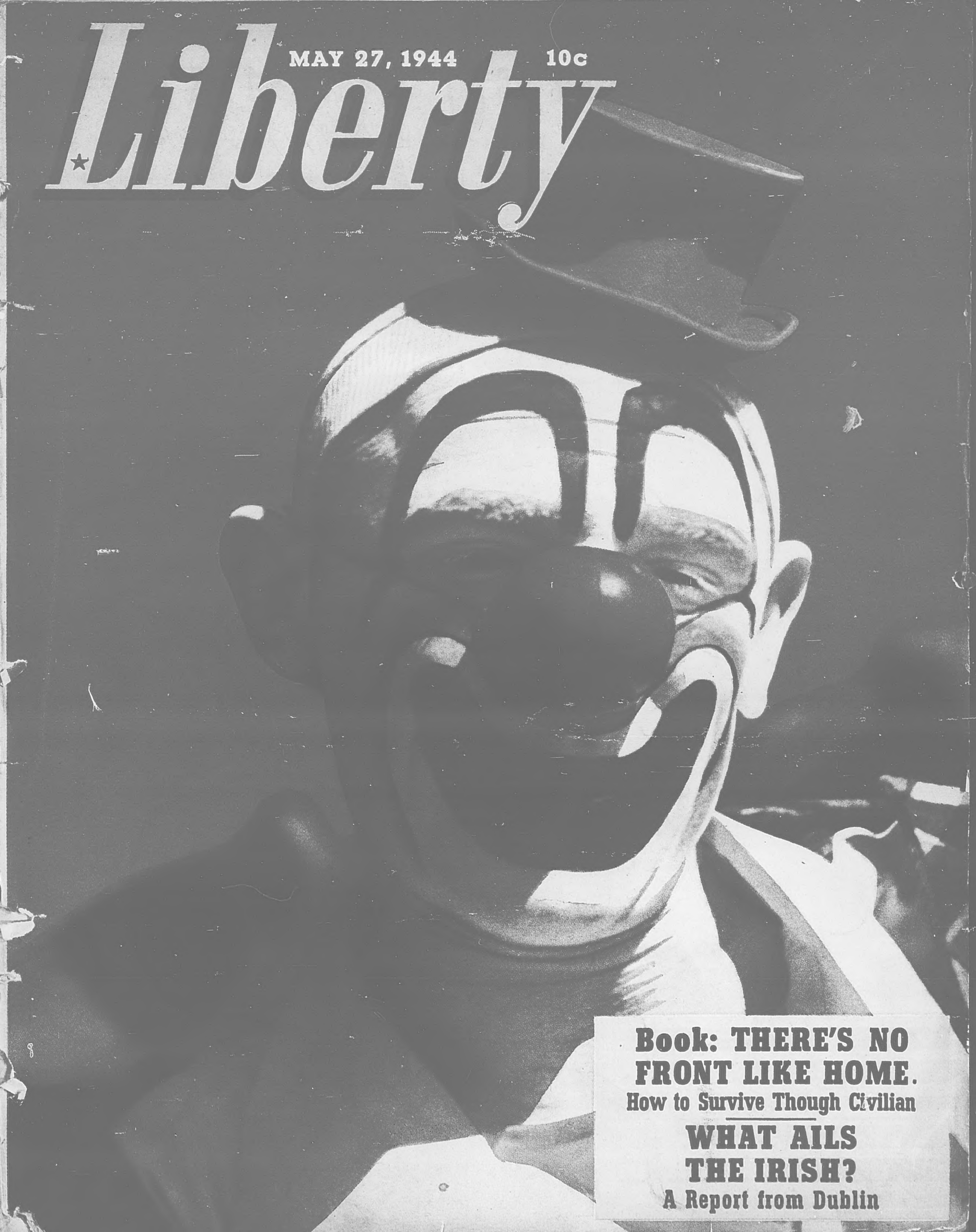
MAY 27, 1944 10c

Liberty



Book: THERE'S NO FRONT LIKE HOME.
How to Survive Though Civilian

WHAT AILS THE IRISH?
A Report from Dublin

GIFT OF THE GAY NINETIES

The TELEPHONE for friendly words . . . LIGHT WHISKEY for friendly taste

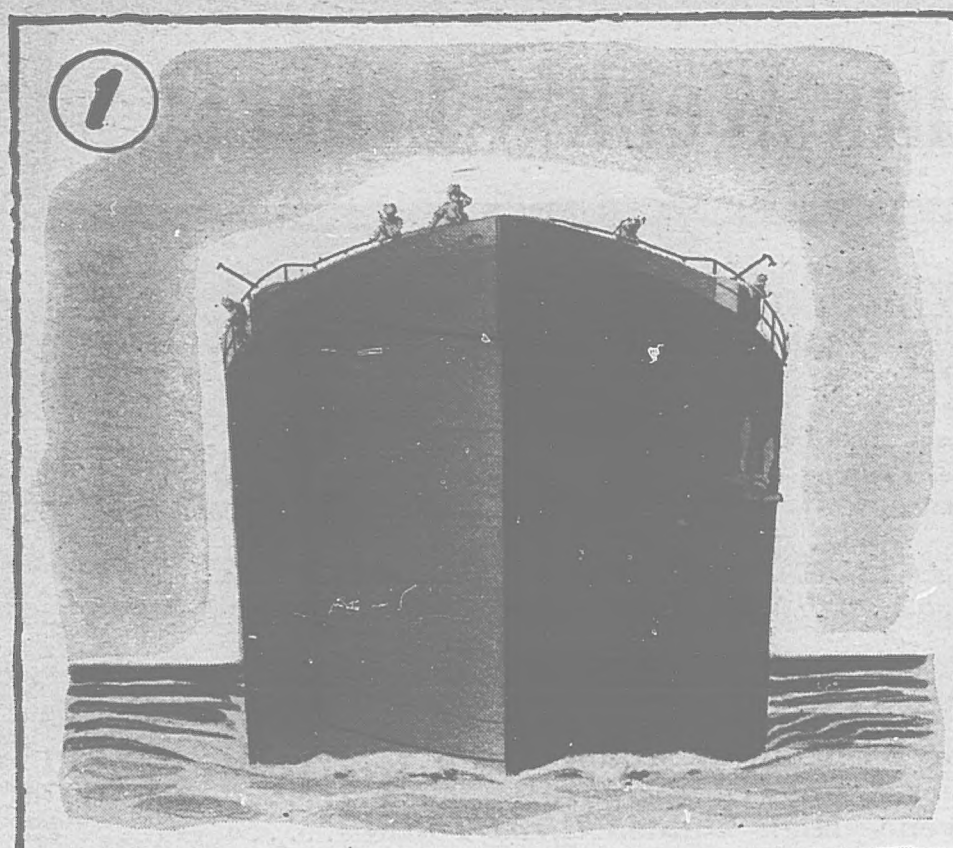
86.8 Proof • 65% Grain Neutral Spirits

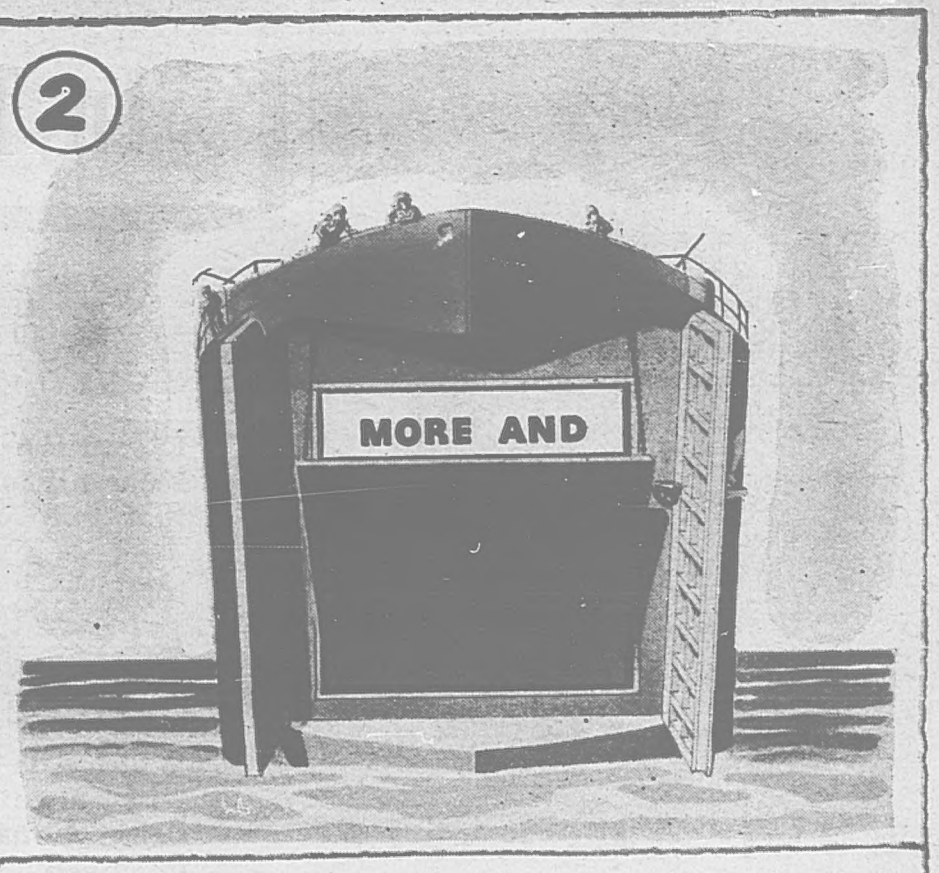
Telephones—light whiskey . . .
those are just two steps on the path of progress credited to the Gay Nineties.

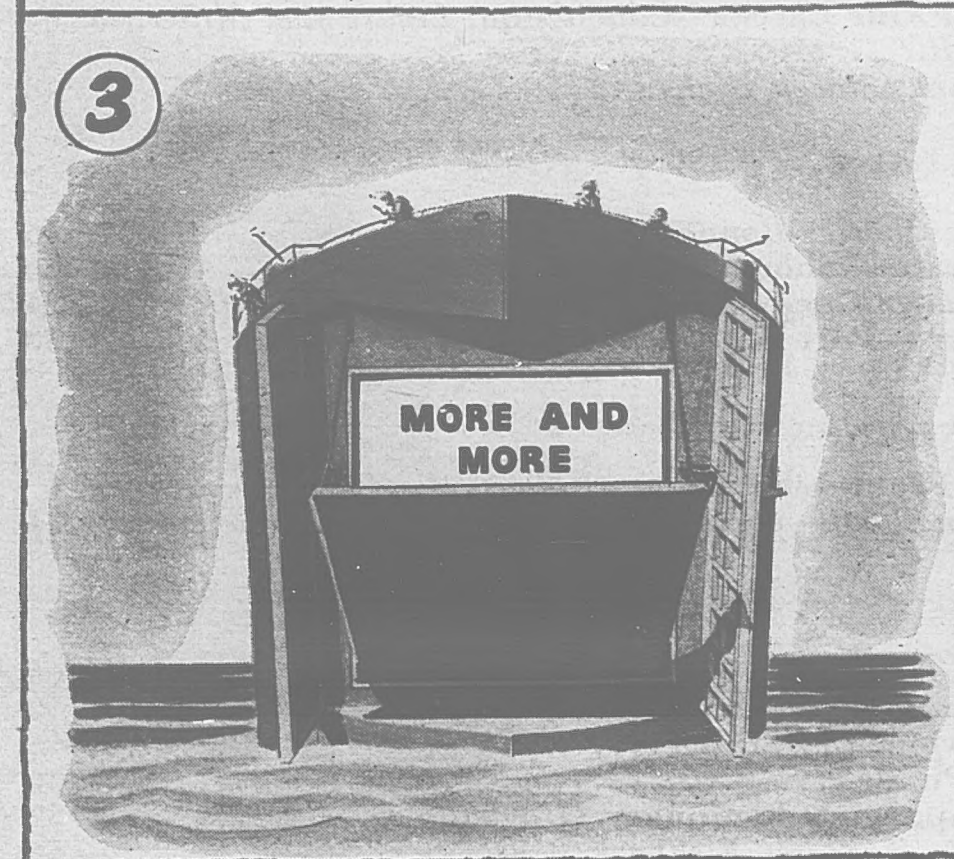
And that same famed better taste of light whiskey is yours to enjoy because the original distiller, Mr. J. G. Kinsey, still personally supervises its blending. Kinsey Distilling Corporation, Linfield, Pa.

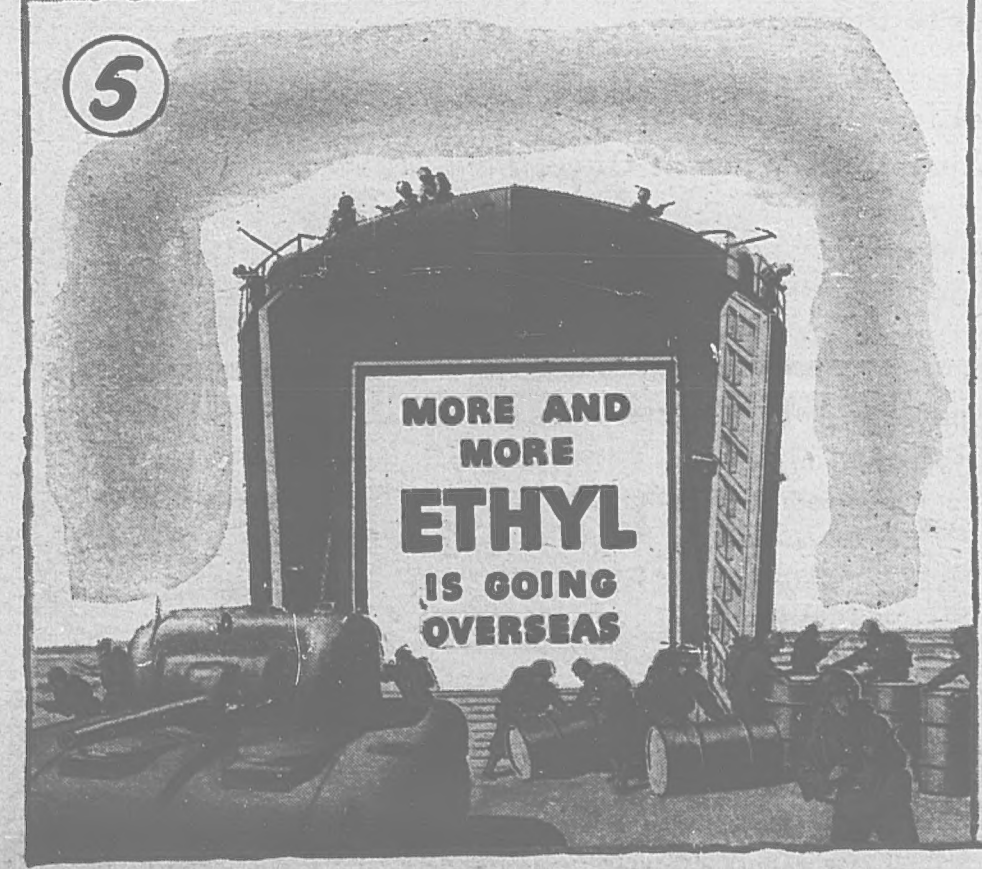
KINSEY
Blended Whiskey

ENJOY THIS DISTINGUISHED WHISKEY, SIR . . . NOW AS IN 1892









NOT ONLY does invasion require oceans of gasoline, but our Army and Navy must have the *very best.*

That's why the antiknock quality of nearly every gallon of fighting gasoline—aviation and motor—is improved with Ethyl fluid.

The petroleum industry is doing a magnificent job of meeting the ever-mounting requirements of our own Army and Navy, the British, the Russians and the Chinese. It is to help oil companies meet these wartime needs that government agencies have placed limits on the quantity and quality of gasoline for civilian use.

ETHYL CORPORATION

Chrysler Building, New York City

ETHYL IS A TRADE MARK NAME

ABOUT YOURSELF

When you change to sport clothes, your whole way of looking at things changes and clears your mind of worry.

I know you are working hard, doing your bit to help win the War. But fitness of body and soul also requires relaxation. Relaxation through exercise relieves nerve tension and builds body resistance.

Can you picture yourself slipping into this Buck Skein leisure coat and not feeling as free as the wind? Try it. It works.

Your Buck Skein is a 100% wool. That means springy, elastic resiliency, and resiliency in wool, as in human nature, means a buoyant and long life that laughs at wrinkles.

The front of the coat comes in soft shades of herringbone, while the sleeves and back, in harmonious contrast, are of a rich, solid shade of brown. This leisure coat is made along the same lines as your own tailored suit. The inside foundation shapes the coat and holds it in shape; padded shoulders for a build-up. It's lined throughout, body and sleeves, with iridescent rayon. Big pockets; leather buttons.

GO TO YOUR DEALER . . . where you'll find many styles in Buck Skein flannel shirts, wool coats, etc. If you can't locate a Buck Skein dealer, use the coupon, please.

As ever,

Buck Skein Joe

Buck Skein Joe
c/o Lustberg Nast & Co., Inc., Makers
212 Fifth Ave., Dept. W-5, New York City
Please send The Buck Skein Leisure Coat C.O.D., at $19.50.

Your choice of three soft shades
Tan ☐ Blue ☐ Grey ☐ Chest size____
Here's my check ☐ or money order ☐ for $19.50
Where can I see the "relaxing" Buck Skein? ☐

Name_____

Address_____

100% WOOL

Buck Skein

TRADE MARK

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Cover: Sign of Spring

COLOR PHOTO BY J. J. STEINMETZ FROM F. P. G.

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LEE WAGNER, CIRCULATION MANAGER

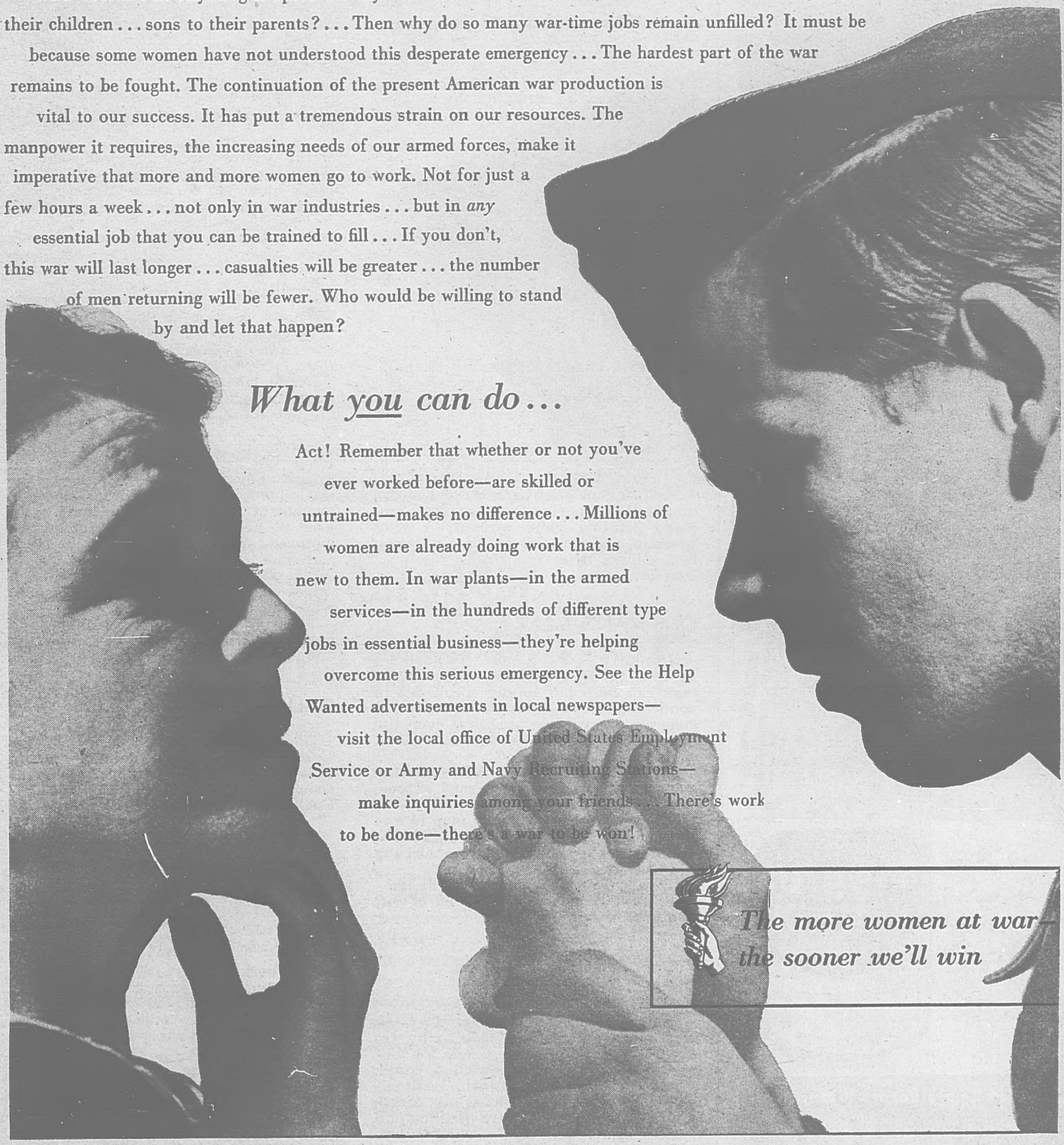
When will the war be over?...

A month after it could have been won?...
A year longer than it should have taken?

American women must give the answer

What American woman doesn't pray with all her heart that Victory will come at the earliest possible moment?

Who wouldn't do anything to speed the day when husbands will come back to their wives . . . fathers return to their children . . . sons to their parents? . . . Then why do so many war-time jobs remain unfilled? It must be because some women have not understood this desperate emergency . . . The hardest part of the war remains to be fought. The continuation of the present American war production is vital to our success. It has put a tremendous strain on our resources. The manpower it requires, the increasing needs of our armed forces, make it imperative that more and more women go to work. Not for just a few hours a week . . . not only in war industries . . . but in *any* essential job that you can be trained to fill . . . If you don't, this war will last longer . . . casualties will be greater . . . the number of men returning will be fewer. Who would be willing to stand by and let that happen?



What you can do . . .

Act! Remember that whether or not you've ever worked before—are skilled or untrained—makes no difference . . . Millions of women are already doing work that is new to them. In war plants—in the armed services—in the hundreds of different type jobs in essential business—they're helping overcome this serious emergency. See the Help Wanted advertisements in local newspapers—visit the local office of United States Employment Service or Army and Navy Recruiting Stations—make inquiries among your friends . . . There's work to be done—there's a war to be won!

The more women at war—the sooner we'll win

This advertisement sponsored by

HOFFMANN-LA ROCHE, INC.

Makers of Vitamins and Medicines of Rare Quality

Roche Park • Nutley, N. J.

Published in cooperation with the Drug, Cosmetic and Allied Industries

TYPICALLY AMERICAN

VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

CUR-RAZY ABOUT CARTOONS

HARBOR BEACH, MICH.—For a long time I have been reading Liberty, and up till the April 15 issue I have had no complaint. In that copy one Charley Smith had the nerve to say that if you wanted to save space you should cut out those "silly little cartoons."

For his information, there are a lot of people who enjoy those cartoons.

I know; I happen to be one of them. The fellows stationed here all read Liberty, and we all like the little cartoons. One way you could save space would be to stop printing letters like Mr. Smith's. Keep up those cartoons.—*W. J. Beyer, Sea. 1/c, U. S. C. G.*

KENOSHA, WIS.—For goodness' sake, don't follow Charley Smith's suggestion. Keep printing your cartoons—I send them to a Marine in the South Pacific who enjoys them immensely.—*Lois L. Pratzer.*

ONE MAN'S MEAT . . .

NASHVILLE, KAN.—Some of the articles in Liberty are fine, but what decent man can help but loudly speak out in condemnation of some of the half-clad suggestive cover pictures, and even the coarse and profane language in some of the articles?

Evidently the editors have forgotten such great men as Dr. Frank Crane, who once said, "Profanity will be a black mark against a young man in any job he may have," and that suggestive pictures are a ruination to our already low morals.

Keep it up if you want less subscriptions from the decent element of our population.—*Alfred Opitz.*

RICH, BEAUTIFUL PROSE DEPARTMENT!

VENTURA, CALIF.—Brother, I think Mrs. Goddard and Mary McCarthy (in April 8 Vox Pop) had grounds for disapproval of Liberty's March 4 cover.

Now, like most mere men, I admire beautiful women and confess that pretty figures in bathing suits are thrilling and I don't mind seeing nice bathing beauty pictures on Liberty's cover. But Miss Gaylord cheapened herself by posing while she was surrounded by a pack of Army and Navy wolves with candid cameras nearly touching her luscious body and taking close-up shots of those portions of her velvety nakedness that seemed to interest them most.

I think any man would decidedly object to his wife, daughter, sweetheart, or sister having to degrade herself by such cheap publicity.—*Bill White.*

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—Speaking of the dreadful spectacle of parts of the female form exposed on your March 4 cover, I'm also against it. That is, anywhere where envious, spindly-shaped females can criticize same. In all my life I have yet to see a *shapely, well built woman* criticize the exposure of the body beautiful.

This goes for the men, too. Let us have a picture of September Morn on your next issue and *really* stir up the hypocrites.—*J. M. Schneider.*

SELMA, ALA.—As a rule Liberty has a very good cover for the week, but the cover for the March 4 edition really hit the spot.

I wish to comment on this cover particularly as it seems that several readers did not appreciate it.—*B. L. Miller.*

PIKESVILLE, MD.—About that March 4 cover and the letters referring to it in April 8 Liberty, I believe that most of the home folk and soldiers too have had enough of viewing nude women, or at least 90 per cent of them. Women are pictured on every billboard, in every magazine, newspaper, and novel.

I have two young daughters whom I would like to raise into respectable womanhood.

Those of you who are bringing up daughters will know what I am talking about.—*Charles Leonard.*

CALLING ALL "QUIZ KIDS"

U. S. NAVAL HOSPITAL, OAKLAND, CALIF.—I hesitated a moment before writing this criticism of your intelligent though slightly wacky Ted Shane. His Cockeyed Puzzles of three years ago

were works of art. Since then they have deteriorated to quizzes for twelve-year-olds. See if you can't snap the maestro out of his coma.—*O. A. Worra, U. S. M. C.*

A SOAPBOX IS REQUESTED

BELLFLOWER, CALIF.—In reference to R. F. Williams' Stump Speakers letter (April 15 Vox Pop), I have this to say. Any one who is so narrow-minded as to refer to our President as a dictator should be shipped to Germany and placed under der Führer's rule. There are a lot of us that would donate money to see that Williams gets a first-class ticket to Germany via air line.

(*Continued on page 10*)

"Jump in, Stranger, We've got State Farm Mutual!"

Even the youngsters know nowadays about State Farm Mutual's *get-rid-of-worry* auto insurance. They can even tell you who the friendly "stranger" is.

The "stranger" is a representative of State Farm Mutual

These motoring little madcaps know their Dad's got nothing to worry about because he just invested in State Farm Mutual's new "Full Service" auto policy. Henceforth, the "stranger" will take over as their Dad's insurance counsel, lawyer, doctor, and bank book, all in one.

New, Simplified Policies Offer Still Broader Protection

We sincerely believe that our new policies not only give you the most protection for the money, but, in their new, simplified form, are far easier to understand than any comparable auto insurance written today. You don't have to be an insurance expert to know how you're covered.

All Auto Insurance is NOT Alike!

There are good reasons why State Farm Mutual has become the world's largest auto insurance company, not the least of which are non-assessable policies, prompt payment of claims, 7000 representatives in the U.S. and Canada, management economies, the pioneering of "80% collision" insurance and six-month renewal policies. Your State Farm Mutual agent will be glad to go over each and every benefit you get as a member of the world's largest auto insurance company. And he'll also be glad to show you how the new, low-cost "Full Service" policy applies to you. Consult with him about your fire and life, as well as your auto insurance—and *get rid of worry today!*

2 VITAL NEW PROTECTIONS

Ask your State Farm agent about Comprehensive Residence and Personal liability or Comprehensive Farm and Farm Employer's liability now available *as part of any one of State Farm Mutual's four new auto policies.*

This assures you of virtually complete worry-free personal liability protection. Send coupon below for FREE booklet.

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Bloomington, Illinois

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State Farm Insurance Companies
Bloomington, Illinois

Please send me your new booklet presenting basic facts about State Farm Mutual's new, streamlined auto policies and the vital, new comprehensive liability protections. I understand this request will not obligate me in any way.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*Zone*.....*State*.....

BUY ANOTHER WAR BOND—HOLD WHAT YOU HAVE

At a jive joint, a slick chick caught a cold

(*Her throat felt simply icky*)

So her Dream Boy made with the KOOLS

(*"Strictly from heaven," she sighed*)

They felt so super then that she said:

UNION MADE

"Why not stay on the beam and smoke 'em all the time?"

Switch from "Hots" to KOOLS

-for good!

THESE ARE THE TIMES

By Clare Jaynes
Liberty's Book Condensation

The fascinating story of possessive Judith Kenyon, who tried to tie her doctor husband to her; of John Kenyon, who viewed the war as an opportunity for service; of Felicia Haines, who understood a man's code—and of two other people who were also the victims of Judith's engulfing selfishness.

ARE WE RUNNING OUT OF OIL?

By Wallace E. Pratt
Vice-President, Standard Oil Company (N. J.)

America runs on oil, and it's plenty disturbing to be informed that the bottom of the oil barrel is in sight. Here are the below-the-earth facts on present supplies and future prospects.

ISLAND COMMAND

By Morris Markey

The Navy is noted for its ability to transform ruined Jap islands into workable bases for Yank striking power. This eyewitness story tells how it was done on Roi-Namur.

RUSSIA'S CHILDREN

By Helen Weigel Brown

Orphaned children present a tremendous problem, but the farseeing Russians have a plan—already working—to restore to each one the full measure of a child's birthright.

SCIENCE ATTACKS AN OLD DISEASE: LONELINESS

By Gretta Palmer

Thousands of people lack friends and companionship. Why? Is there something wrong with them? Science comes up with a helpful answer.

THE BAZOOKA IS BORN

By Edwin Diehl

The story of the gun that looks like a rainspout is a thrilling chapter in our war history. Here's the account of the workers who got the Bazooka to the front—and on time!

WITHOUT MOTIVE

By Thyra Samter Winslow

The story behind the disappearance of Gordon would have shocked the neighbors. But the only person who really knew the facts would never tell!

WIND IN THE VALLEY

By Gordon Malherbe Hillman

The poignant story of a schoolboy who comes to know himself through the eyes of his best friend—when tragedy strikes close to home.

A CASEY ROBINSON production

DAYS OF GLORY

The story of a mighty hatred . . . and a magnificent love!

Tomorrow . . . danger, death would lurk in the forest. Tonight it was a haven where dreams, the impassioned yearning of their lips, seemed more real than the duty to avenge and destroy.

. . . starring the screen's exciting NEW lovers

TAMARA
TOUMANOVA
GREGORY
PECK

with a brilliant cast of new screen faces
Alan REED · Maria PALMER · Lowell GILMORE
Directed by JACQUES TOURNEUR
Produced and written for the screen by Casey Robinson

ANOTHER OF THE GREAT RKO RADIO PICTURES

Schick Blades are Back

How long since you've enjoyed the ease and comfort of a Schick Injector shave?

Stop figuring right now. Your Schick Blades are back . . . back in force at your dealer's. We're now able to meet all demands . . . civilian as well as military . . . for these smooth-shaving, keen-edged blades.

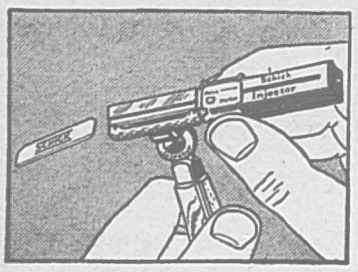
So put your Schick Injector Razor back to work tomorrow. Enjoy again the revolutionary Schick Injector features that make shaving a pleasure instead of a chore!

Here are the only basic safety razor improvements in over 40 years.

Each is a revolutionary Schick Injector improvement . . . designed to take the pull, discomfort and inconvenience out of shaving. Yours to enjoy once more . . .

AUTOMATIC BLADE CHANGE

. . . an exclusive Schick Injector feature. A pull and push on the Injector shoots out the old blade, slides in a fresh one instantly. Nothing to take apart or re-assemble. No fumbling with sharp blade edges or messy paper wrappers.

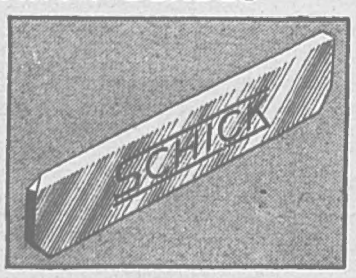


SOLID GUIDE BAR

. . . has a sure-grip surface that stretches and flattens the skin just ahead of the blade. Pops up whiskers for closer, more comfortable shave. Corner guards protect against nicking and scraping.

DOUBLE-THICK BLADES

. . . just as long but twice as thick as ordinary blades. 3 times as thick as paper-thin ones. So they take and hold a really keen edge. Oil packed in special cartridge, cutting edges are suspended in space.



SCHICK INJECTOR RAZOR and BLADES

Magazine Repeating Razor Co., Bridgeport 1, Conn.

(*Continued from page 6*)

It's people like you, Mr. Williams, who are saboteurs to the war effort. I'm not saying that a Republican can't make a good President. But there isn't one Republican on the horizon that can match Roosevelt.

When you refer to "restoring constitutional government back to the people where it belongs," it sounds very much like restoring the government back to the *capitalists* so the workingman can suffer another Hoover administration.

So I say, Mr. Williams, offer us something really terrific in the line of a Republican candidate for President, and, brother, we'll give you a try.—*Mrs. W. T. Lowe.*

SHORT BUT TO THE POINT

LAKE LINDEN, MICH.—This to R. F. Williams: If you think the President is as much of a dictator as Hitler, perhaps you wonder why we are the best fed nation in the world. You, Mr. Williams, are the sort of person the Allies will try to re-educate in Europe.—*Lachlan MacDonald.*

NO BEATING AROUND THE BUSHIDO

PHOENIX, ARIZ.—Of all the astounding things I have ever read in this era of senseless talk, Mrs. Penoyer's letter (April 8 Vox Pop) defending the Japs takes the prize. It is fortunate that she is not within reaching distance of a few Western women whose boys were tortured to death in the March of Death, or whose daughters were herded into brothels for the pleasure of the Japanese male. In case Mrs. Penoyer doesn't read the papers, she will, of course, not know of those things, as the Public Library could not furnish the information.

Mrs. Penoyer is certainly not an American—her lack of knowledge of American women is topped only by her screamingly funny remarks about the English and Scandinavian women being "treated like queens." Apparently she

lines up squarely with the Axis powers in their attitude toward women. Chain 'em in the home and let 'em have fifteen sons apiece, so we will be assured of wars for all time to come. The joker is, however, that even the Japs are being forced to use woman power in their factories. They must unchain 'em for at least a few hours at a time.

Finally, here's a warning. For your own good, do not stand on any street corner, *especially* in San Francisco, and exhort free-born American women to model their lines on the Japanese.—*Mrs. R. H. Cressingham.*

WE LIKE YOU TOO, MISTER PUFFER!

EL SEGUNDO, CALIF.—I've just finished my twentieth rereading of Richard Hubler's Love of Lucky. (April 15 Liberty.)

My congratulations and thanks to Liberty and Mr. Hubler for the prettiest bit of writing the war has thus far produced.

It is a beautiful piece of work, as finished, as polished as a diamond—and, as short stories go, I'll say, as durable. —*Bud Puffer.*

SUCH A PERFECTIONIST!

OSHKOSH, WIS.—I have been a Liberty reader for years because your articles are so authentic. However, you surely muffed one in the April 8 issue.

One page 69, in the article Goldwyn's Golden Touch, you state, "He never carries anything in his pockets—*no handkerchief,*" etc.

And then you show a fine picture of Sam and Mrs. on page 30. If that isn't a handkerchief in his upper coat pocket I'll eat next week's Liberty. How about it?—*Harry G. Walsh.*

H'm-m . . . Mrs. Goldwyn must have slipped the handkerchief in Sam's pocket when we weren't looking!—VOX POP EDITOR.

SOME CITIZENS SPEAK THEIR PIECE!

RECTORY, VA.—Please permit me to reply to the editorial Unquiet Along the Potomac (April 8 Liberty). Isn't this a typical right wing Republican viewpoint? I challenge it! The people know different. I believe there's no question that the President is a far abler man than the average member of Congress. I believe he realizes better what is good for the country and sees much further than the average member of Congress.

We judge Congress by results. And

intelligent opinion agrees it has produced a negative, reactionary mess.

Don't kid us with campaign stuff all summer. We are concerned with the war and not politicians.

Imagine trading a world leader for a miserable fence-sitting provincial supported by reaction and isolation and "America First," including Bertie McCormick!—*Anna M. McMichael.*

AUBURN, ME.—I have read your message about Congress and the President. I am confident some Republican wrote it and paid you to print it. It is a complete tissue of lies and will turn all true patriots against your publication.—*John B. Branch, Minister of the Gospel.*

NEW YORK, N. Y.—I would like to say something about Liberty's editorial, Unquiet Along the Potomac.

I disagree that "most of the blame for the bust-up must be laid at the door of F. D. R." Yes, "the President's job is to keep Congress on his side"—*when* it is a Congress that is not sabotaged by a few powerful men eager to promote only themselves.

The blame is not in Congress as a body, but in those few narrow-minded selfish "representatives" who place personal affairs ahead of national welfare. Their criticisms and arguments have *not* been constructive and helpful.—*W. W. Lyman, U. S. C. G. R.*

Our editorial contention was based on principles, not on personalities.—VOX POP EDITOR.

Blatz Beer

Fast Becoming

AMERICA'S NEW FAVORITE

Satisfying to the last

GOOD TASTE

BLATZ and GOOD TASTE go together... and they're going places! Blatz is fast becoming first choice wherever critical beer drinkers gather!

Perhaps you'd like to know why. It's easy—simply taste Blatz! Then you'll know how much more satisfying Blatz Good Taste really is.

Never sharp... never bitter... always mellow

Blatz Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. • *In our 93rd year*

MILWAUKEE'S MOST EXQUISITE BEER

NOTICE
The prompt return of
ALL EMPTY BEER BOTTLES
to your source of supply is urgently requested.

Copyright 1944, Blatz Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

BUY WAR BONDS

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

A North American B-25 scores a hit on a Jap ship at Rabaul Harbor. Light spots along the shore line are fires caused by U. S. bombers.

Bombing Objectives

Last week we discussed the strategy of our bombing offensive against Germany. The logical sequel is a discussion of what this bombing has accomplished to date, how it compares with the damage done to England by the Germans, and what we can expect in the future. Our own Army Air Forces recently supplied information on the damage in Germany. As for the damage accomplished in England, this writer can speak from personal observation.

It must always be kept in mind that there are two distinct results to any bombing campaign. One is the destruction of purely civilian property. The other is vital military and factory installations and communication centers. The R. A. F., in its excellent continued night bombing, has concentrated on area attacks—wiping out of entire areas of cities. Our own Eighth Air Force has gone after vital specific areas. Either type of air warfare will bring results over a period of time; each has its special advantage. But the lesson learned by each is that *there can be no let-up in the campaign,* because the recuperative powers of an industrial civilization are great.

The Two Methods

To summarize what we have said on this page many times during the past year, it is important to distinguish between day and night bombing, between "area" and "precision" objectives. Because its heavy bombers are much less heavily armed and armored than U. S. bombers, the Royal Air Force has been able to carry greater tonnage of bombs under the cloak of darkness to German cities. Intentional precision hits on specific factories are virtually impossible by this method (although they often happen), but within an area outlined by the flares left by the advance "pathfinder" planes, the R. A. F. bombers can accomplish much damage merely by pouring several thousand tons of high explosives and incendiaries upon an entire section of a city.

The Eighth Air Force heavy bombers (Flying Fortresses and Liberators) operating in daytime must be heavily armed and armored to protect themselves against Nazi fighters, hence weight of bombs must be sacrificed for weight of armament and armor. But they fight their way through to a specific target and can destroy it.

Damage to England

Back in the 1940-41 blitz against England, the Germans put out everything they had. Much damage was caused by fires, one reason being that the British had not perfected their fire-watching and fire-control systems at that time. The actual amount of high explosives dropped by the Luftwaffe was far under the totals being dropped today on Germany—far under.

Since returning from five weeks in England, the first question inevitably asked of this writer is, "What about the bomb damage to London?" The answer is, it is amazing how much was not hit or damaged. The Germans were anything but scientific. They had neither the means nor the preparations to knock out England by air. Even so, the bomb damage in London and a number of important cities is large.

The Germans neither concentrated on wiping out a single city nor on wiping out vital factory installations. Had they done one or the other, England would have felt the results deeply. At no place in England is there the concentrated widespread area damage that shows up so clearly on aerial photographs of German cities. To blast to bits a few houses in a block will not cripple a city. Traveling around London, one sees a great deal of scattered damage. But the total damage in relation to the vast city and its environs is mighty small. In the East End of London only, where fires caught hold and spread, is there anything comparable to what is happening to German cities.

Air enthusiasts who have worshiped at the shrine of strategic bombing are always "disappointed" at what they see in London—not that they wanted the British bombed out, of course, but because ground force officers always point to London and say, "See, aerial bombing doesn't amount to much. If the Germans couldn't do it, how do you expect our bombers to do much more to Germany?" But the longer one is in England, the more damage becomes apparent. It is still far under the decisive margin by which a nation is crippled, but combined with aerial photographs of Germany one begins to sense the ultimate crippling of the German war machine by scientific bombing.

One can travel literally for miles in some London districts and see little or no damage at all. Some of the damage has been repaired; most of it has not. But there are times when one sees plenty of it. The Germans simply carried on hit-or-miss attacks which caused inconvenience and disruption of some civilian activities, but which were not fatal by any means. The life of the city never stopped. Out of the estimated eight millions of people in the Greater London area, only a very small portion was killed or injured. In some important cities outside of London the damage was relatively greater.

Lessons Learned

The recuperative strength of an industrial nation is amazing. A factory can be blown to bits, but production resumes elsewhere. Output is reduced, naturally, but the ability of human beings to pack up and start over is truly an inspiring sight.

The Germans lost forever their chance to hit England fatally several years ago because the Luftwaffe was not able to keep up the campaign and hadn't prepared it scientifically. If any lesson has been learned at all, it is that strategic bombing must be scientific, prepared with great care and study, and *continued.*

To knock out a single factory disturbs only production. One must know first of all where all the factories making a particular product are located, go after each one, observe by aerial reconnaissance all efforts by the enemy to rebuild, and then strike again when the rebuilt plant is about ready to resume production. Our Eighth Air Force has gone after several types of factories in concentrated, continuous attack. One is ball-bearing plants—the most vital single war material. The other is aircraft plants. Next will be rubber and oil installations. Merely to destroy one ball-bearing plant, several aircraft factories, and one or two rubber and oil installations is not scientific. That is where the Germans missed the boat; that is where the Allied Air war is gaining decisively.

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BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

WHAT AILS THE IRISH?

BY BETTY MILTON GASKILL

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

Why is Eire still neutral, and how do the Irish feel about it? A reporter on the scene makes a puzzling picture come clear

Dublin (by cable)

SNUG behind the walls of the world's strictest censorship, Ireland is a cloistered nun who remains stoutly impervious to a war "she didn't start, won't fight, and can't stop." Her refusal to expel Axis diplomats has bewildered the Allied world; her international prestige has collapsed like a punctured balloon. Yet the Irish people are unashamed. In fact, they are proud.

It takes a mere twenty-four hours in Dublin to discover how the Irish people themselves feel about it. They are not pro-German; they believe strongly in the Allied cause, but are backing their government all the way in strict neutrality. Out of the 138-member Dail, or Parliament, only one man, Dr. Theobald Dillon, opposes it. The entire nation is solidly united.

A psychologist might see Ireland as a case of split personality. Sympathy for us clashes with the determination to remain neutral, and probably no threat of sanctions will ever succeed in melting these conflicting feelings into the openly pro-Allied neutrality we want. Neutrality has become to Ireland the symbol of her independence—a flag to fly before the world to signify that she is really free.

The key to Ireland's present is in her past. For eight centuries she was under British domination and fought bitterly against it. The fight for liberty and the many failures were accompanied by poverty, famine, and disease. Young Irishmen by the hundreds of thousands left the pauper-ridden isle for the rich promise of security in America or Britain. A century ago Ireland boasted almost nine million in population; now she has only about three million.

In their humiliation the Irish developed an inevitable complex. If they ever did achieve that wondrous goal, freedom, they would show the world a thing or two. Nobody would ever again tell an Irishman what to do. The Irish character was misshapen around this trembling pivot. It was a shock when in 1921 they found themselves a free dominion, complete mistress of their own destinies.

"The world seems to forget that Eire is a tragic lady with a past," said an Irish economist as we talked together in the lobby of Dublin's fashionable Shelbourne Hotel. "We've had only twenty years to forget the centuries of cruelties and tyranny. As it was, the bloody trouble from 1914 to 1920 was ending just twenty-four years ago. I don't know whether our revolutionists or the British fought the more fiercely, but I do know that the British Black and Tans were the most disreputable bunch any nation ever sent abroad. It was a time of murder and atrocities. And what you must remember is that the very bunch of young hotheads who finally freed us from England then are the middle-aged backbone of this country now. They are running the government!"

That is quite true. There is hardly a leader in Eire's government today who wasn't a member of the old Irish Republican Army.

"Take the Prime Minister, for instance," the economist continued. "De Valera was a young lieutenant back in those days and spent most of his youth fighting England. He was in a British prison when we elected him head of our provisional government. Take the opposition party leader, General Richard Mulcahy. He opposes De Valera now on certain political issues, but he was chief of staff of the Irish Republican Army. Take anybody. Take Frank Gallaher, now government press chief. He remembers because he nearly starved himself to death on a forty-two-day hunger strike protesting British treatment back in 1920."

While it is true that the Irish like the British better now than ever before, this is largely because Britain has tactfully respected Irish neutrality—and even continues to send vital supplies. Also, they admire the British guts and in 1940 were perhaps the only nation who couldn't believe the British were licked.

This isn't to say the Irish have in twenty short years decided that the British are the nicest people on earth. One old Irishman told me, "The British are on the side of human rights in this war, but how they got there is one of the world's greatest mysteries." And another remarked, "We want the British to win, don't ye doubt that. But neither must ye doubt (*Continued on page 59*)

BRITISH COMBINE PHOTO
Prime Minister Eamon de Valera.

NEXT OF KIN

BY CHARLES BONNER

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN COLLINS

AS he entered the living room after Sunday dinner, John Williams saw the clipping sticking out of the book on the center table. In the past trying months it had become the most familiar single object in his small world. Removing the strip of newsprint from between the leaves, he held it uncertainly in his hand.

"I should burn it," he told himself without conviction.

What did surprise him was that May should have mislaid it for a second. She usually carried it everywhere, even to meals. Before sitting down, she would lay the book on the sideboard, with the little piece of newspaper projecting so that it would never be out of sight of her soft brown eyes, from which, it seemed, the last possible ounce of grief had been wrung.

Although he knew it by heart, he read the item again, the short casualty list, date-lined Washington, three months ago, and published in a county newspaper.

"The War Department today released the following additional Westchester casualties in the North African theater:

Killed

POWELL, ARNOLD C., corporal; mother, Mrs. Mary Powell, 2243 Elmway Drive, Port Chester.

RUDGE, THOMAS, private; father, Henry L. Rudge, 801 Second Street, Mount Vernon.

WILLIAMS, JOHN D., JR., second lieutenant; father, John D. Williams, Mountain Highway, Fairbrook.

Wounded

BARNES, WILLIAM, sergeant; friend, Lester Smith, 973 River Road, Mamaroneck.

ZIEGLER, JOSEPH H., private; father, Jack Ziegler, White Plains Road, Tuckahoe."

Thoughtfully he walked to the bookshelves in the north wall, selected a volume at random, folded the clipping and tucked it securely between the leaves. He was about to replace the book on the shelf when he was aware that Lorna had come in. Ordinarily her dark fresh young loveliness gave him a great lift, but now her questioning glance depressed him.

"It won't do any good, dad," she said. She took the book from his hand. "She sent me in for it."

"I thought if we could only lose the thing," he said.

"It would only make her fretful," Lorna said. "At least she's calm when she thinks of him."

"She thinks of nothing else."

Lorna removed the cutting and placed it in the original volume. "Why Mr. and Mrs. Cugat?" she wondered.

"I thought you knew. That was what he was reading when he left. Lorna, I'm worried. It's so awfully morbid. I'm afraid—I'm afraid she'll get really sick."

"Dr. Friend says there isn't a thing wrong with her."

"She can *make* herself sick," he said.

She came to his side, laid a hand on his arm. "If we could only get her to think of something else, to see something besides this piece of paper, his room, that closet full of clothes and tennis rackets and all sorts of things that wring your heart."

Bill was just the next name on the casualty list until he entered the Williams household and turned the shrine of mourning into a home once more

"That room," he said, "with the door always shut."

"She was cross this morning when Annie put the slippers in the closet. Jack had left them beside his bed."

"I'd like to turn it all around," her father said with some vehemence. "I wish to heaven some one could occupy it, sleep in it—live in it!"

Lorna pushed back her hair which grew like a wreath of soft curls low on her neck. "That's what Jack would have wanted. He would have hated—the way things are. This quiet, endless mourning." She pushed aside the curtains and looked out onto the badminton court. "Nothing he liked more than a rumpus. Noise—he loved it."

"He was very alive," John said. He said it, smiling. He found that he could now think of his son, smiling.

"He would have hated it this way," his sister repeated. "He would have wanted us to be alive—us and the house. Dad, what does Dr. Friend really think about mother?"

"He thinks she'll come out of it in time. He says she should find new interests."

"And she hasn't come out of it in time, and she hasn't found any new interest."

Her father did not answer for a moment. He moved back to the library table, picked up Mr. and Mrs. Cugat. "I'll go and stay with her for a little while. Why don't you go out for a breath of air?"

She smiled quickly. "Oh, I'm all right."

He looked into her serious eyes, at the lovely rounded intelligent forehead. Lorna hadn't the fountain of gaiety which had made Jack so charming, but she had a well of quiet humor and common sense that would forever protect her. It was a pity, though, that the double blow to her family—her brother's loss and her mother's failure to recover from it—should come at a time when she ought to be thinking about establishing a family of her own.

"Why don't you call that Dexter boy at the camp?" he said, not very hopefully. "The red-haired one that used to sing those funny songs. I'll stake the two of you to a blowout in town."

"Dad, you're a sweet old man. Dexter has been married for a week to Peg Winston. They're on their honeymoon."

"Lord," John said, "it's hard to keep track."

"Everybody's gone clean off the track," Lorna laughed. But he noticed the brief shadow reflected in her eyes. "I'll take a walk, and then I'll relieve you."

Reliefs. Had it come to that? Poor May.

He went upstairs and looked into their room. It was empty, but he hardly expected to find her there. He walked across the hall and softly turned the knob of the door opposite, the door which was always shut.

She stood unmoving at the far side of the bed, her hands folded in front of her, a small woman with a girlish figure and a wealth of dark hair brushed up from the pale clear skin which Lorna had inherited, along with the same warm brown eyes.

The bed was turned down, the counterpane neatly folded over the footboard. A pair of blue pajamas and a maroon dressing gown lay across the covers, and John could see the morocco slippers lined up on the floor. Morocco, he thought. Ironically symbolic.

As he entered she raised her head a little and her eyes lighted on the book in his hand. With a swift quiet movement she was at his side, and he released it into her fingers. Rapidly she leafed the pages to see that the clipping was safe.

"Some one must have taken it," she said mildly. There was no reproach in her tone. It was merely factual.

"No, dear," he said gently. "You left it in the living room before dinner. Don't you remember?" It seemed to him perhaps a good sign that she had forgotten it for as much as an hour.

"I don't see how I could," she said.

THEY stood in silence and John could feel the awkwardness growing in him. It was always this way.

"Darling," he said, "don't you think it's time for a Sunday siesta?"

That might work, he thought, because it hinted no criticism of her conduct. Almost everybody took Sunday siestas.

She looked up and smiled faintly. "Yes, dear," she said. "Yes, perhaps it is."

There was, he thought, perhaps some method in this submissiveness, as if to show how reasonable she could be, and then no one would think of depriving her of the privilege of standing guard in her son's room.

He sat down on the edge of her bed until she appeared relaxed. She raised

(*Continued on page 63*)

"Now tell me, sergeant," Lorna was saying. "Just what was Africa like?"

OLD SARGE

Sarge (dark shirt) got the Lavender Heart for falling into the ocean. Other officers got Salvage of Old Sarge Order for pulling him out.

THE mail was getting heavy and I needed a vacation. I'm referring to the mail which pours in to my question-and-answer department, This Man's War, which appears regularly in the pages of Liberty.

In my language, a vacation is not a trip to Florida, so I decided to thumb a ride across the Atlantic in a battleship. I was hoping we'd run into six or seven submarines and that maybe I could personally toss a marlinespike at one of them.

But the only thing that hit our ship below the water line was me. Through no enemy action whatsoever, I found myself paddling around the Atlantic one frigid night, and how they ever fished me out will always remain a mystery to me.

More of that later.

I got myself accredited as a correspondent with the United States Navy, and was told I'd have to get me a uniform—an Army officer's uniform minus the insignia, and with a correspondent's patch on the sleeve. Since my object was vacation, not duration, I borrowed the rig from a good pal of mine, and it fitted fine after a slight unraveling of the waistline.

I felt like something out of Ripley—an Old Sarge about to ship with the Navy in an Army officer's uniform. And—oh, yes—a very special pal gave me a going-away present of a tremendous sea coat with a sheepskin lining. This little gift weighed about 200 pounds when filled with water, and was the chief reason why I still can't figure out how they fished me out of the sea.

Naturally, I can't disclose the name of the battleship, so suppose we call it the U. S. S. Gesundheit, which some of us called it for the gag, anyway. But no hard feelings. It was a great ship—one of the best.

Old Sarge, who gets all the breaks, boarded the Gesundheit while a small-sized hurricane was roaring out of the northeast and sleet was rattling all over the steel decks. One of the officers gave me this nice warm welcome: "This gale will probably follow us all the way over." The executive officer, Commander Russell G. Sturges, gave me the official welcome: "Happy to have you aboard, sir," and I, green to the gills already, took a notch in the sheep-lined coat and replied, "Happy to be aboard, sir!"

We picked up a convoy, mostly troopships, somewhere offshore, and a number of destroyers joined us to complete the party. The Gesundheit was commodore of the convoy, or, in other words, the command ship.

I spent a lot of time on the open bridge getting a good view of the whole show, and if it hadn't been so bloomin' cold I'd have taken my hat off to the Navy and kept it off. That convoy was running like clockwork. The ships kept their places with precision despite the rough sea, and the protecting destroyers swept about on their appointed rounds with never a slip-up. The whole thing reminded me of a dress parade at West Point. A proud heart beat under that sheepskin coat.

Once we got a message that a large home-bound convoy was heading our way. The skipper, Captain Powell M. Rhea, ordered a fifteen-second warning blast for an "emergency turn." Running lights were ordered on—a precaution against collisions. Then a short blast of our whistle, and the entire convoy swung majestically forty-five degrees to starboard. Running lights were ordered out again. Shortly thereafter word reached the bridge that the convoy had passed us safely, and, following another emergency turn, we resumed our course.

After a few days out I began to navigate passing well, though the sea was rougher than the inside of a washing machine. At the outset I felt a bit wobbly, but this passed and my only reaction was a mild, dopey feeling like a young fellow gets when he smokes a cigar.

Unfortunately, some of the soldiers on the transports didn't fare so well. I could see them lining the rails any hour of the day. Some of those transports were really pitching.

It was a shame to be seasick aboard the Gesundheit, because the food was absolutely out of this world. Oyster stew, filet mignon, and turkey with dressing. Then, in case you got hungry between meals, coffee, tea, cocoa, and sandwiches were available twenty-four hours a day.

I NEVER saw so much food in one place. There were twenty tons of citrus fruits aboard. And potatoes—well, the daily consumption aboard the Gesundheit was an even ton. I saw mountains of canned fruits and fruit juices, fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, eggs, turkeys, chickens, and enough meat to give the OPA a conniption fit. The meat was boneless, to save space.

Our paymaster, Lieutenant Commander Philip Ashler (nicknamed "Pay"), was in charge of food supplies. He'd sit at one end of the mess table, opposite the exec, and for him every meal was a symphony—a symphony of gripes. Pay's ears were forever stopping such remarks as:

"What's this—leftovers?"

"Hey, Pay, this is the same soup we had yesterday!"

"This steak ain't boneless—it's meatless!"

"What's this, fricassee of shoe leather?"

Commander Sturges, the exec, was on a diet, and it broke his heart to pass up a second helping of oyster stew, but every time he weakened, the bull surg—Lieutenant Commander H. Todd Stradford, the senior medical officer—would look at him firmly and say, "Better go easy on that," or "No, no, no, no, commander!"

Of course, the one guy on board who should have been on a diet was Old Sarge. But I figure you can starve any time, so why insult my hosts?

There were a couple of newspaper correspondents on board, and we decided to pull a rib on one of them—the same rib that was pulled on me on the way over in World War I.

"Better get some letters written," I told him. "We're going to drop a mail buoy tonight."

"A mail buoy? What's that?" he asked.

"Well, sir," I explained, "we fill a buoy up with letters and drop it off at a certain point; then another ship, going the other way, picks it up."

So this guy retires to his cabin and

SEES ACTION

BY OLD SARGE

Liberty proudly presents its own submersible, Old Sarge, in a gusty trip across—not to mention into—the Atlantic. Batten your hatches and hang on

starts writing a mile a minute. In the meantime, we get a sailor to rig up a laundry bag like a mail pouch, and he starts making the rounds for the "ten o'clock mail call." It almost causes a riot among the crew. Our correspondent isn't the only one who believes in mail buoys. The correspondent has three lengthy epistles written when the gob with the laundry bag reaches his cabin. "Can't you give me a few minutes more?" he asks the gob. "I've got to get the exec to censor these."

We never did let him in on the gag.

This same correspondent got a "phone call" a few days later. He was occupying the captain's cabin, by the way. The captain never occupies it while at sea. He has an emergency cabin up near the bridge, and often loans out his main cabin to guests.

Well, the bell in this cabin jingles and a Marine orderly calls the correspondent. "It's for you, sir," he says.

"Hello," says the correspondent.

"New York is calling," replies a voice (otherwise known as Old Sarge).

"Whazat?"

"New York is calling. Will you accept the call?"

"Sure, put 'em on," says the correspondent, and then I hear him say aside to the Marine orderly, "This must be my office calling."

"Hold on, please," I say, and then hang up the receiver in the communications room very softly. I later learn that this guy hangs on the phone for twenty-five minutes waiting for his "office"—and when he finally gets wise he chases the Marine orderly all over the ship trying to find out who done it.

One morning we dropped behind the convoy for target practice. It was at 9 A. M. (or 0900) and was during General Quarters. G. Q. is another name for Battle Stations. I remember one G. Q. at night when a mess attendant got his signals mixed and thought he was supposed to prepare to abandon ship. His station was down in the magazine, as an ammunition passer. Instead, he was running around the deck, inquiring, "Where's number four life raft? Where's number four life raft?"

AFTER this 9 A. M. target practice we had a surprise G. Q. pulled on us at 10.20. All our five-inch secondary batteries opened fire, and the 40-mm. quadruple Bofors and 20-mm. rapid-fire ack-acks started spitting tracers. It was quite a show. Soldiers lined the rails of the transports and watched. Then Navy gun crews on the transports opened fire with antiaircraft and the whole thing looked like an oceanic Fourth of July.

We changed our course when Captain Rhea received reports that a convoy ahead of us had been attacked by Nazi dive bombers the day before. And reports came that a sub concentration was moving south and west. Several times, especially during the night, we made sub "contacts"—meaning we heard the wolves prowling around us.

But that's where the Gesundheit was doing its job just by being present. U-boats usually know when there's a big convoy moving through, but if the protection is strong enough Schicklgruber's water babies won't attack. They know that any U-boat which runs into a nest like ours will have about as much chance as an egg in an orange squeezer.

Somebody may ask, "Why is a battleship necessary for convoy duty? Wouldn't destroyers be sufficient?"

Well, there are four good reasons. First, the Gesundheit mounts a couple of catapult planes. These provide long-range reconnaissance. Roaming far out ahead, they can spot surfaced subs, or even submerged ones on a calm sunny day.

Second, there would always be deadly peril of surface raiders if the Gesundheit weren't along. One of Hitler's pocket battleships, for example, could stand out of destroyer range and hack a convoy to splinters. But the Gesundheit's 14-inchers can outrange any pocket battleship and fill its gizzard with hot steel before it even begins to play.

Third, the battlewagon stands ready with extra supplies of fuel oil and food in case the convoy runs short, and the big ship has superior repair shops and hospital and surgical facilities.

Finally, the modern battleship has aerial defenses far superior to those of smaller warships. Take the Gesundheit. It is not a new ship. In fact, it was one of those damaged at Pearl Harbor. The Navy rebuilt it and equipped it with more antiaircraft guns than were on all the ships at Pearl Harbor put together. When the Gesundheit throws steel into the sky you've got an umbrella that can shield an entire convoy.

Anyway, we cut through the submarine zone without incident and soon found ourselves coasting safely and soundly into a British port.

The first thing I do in port is to look around for what our British allies call a pub. I find four, but the best any of them can offer is beer, and I am no beer drinker. Finally I approach a bobby and say, "I say, guv'ner, you wouldn't 'appen to know where a laddie could get himself a drink of whisky, now, wouldya?"

"Well, now—" he begins.

I quickly add, "That is, if it 'appened that y'did know, I'd like you to 'ave a little drink with me."

With this he brightens up and says, "Why, yes. Now that you mention it, I do know of a plyce."

Whereupon he takes me to one of the pubs I've just been to, except that it has "just this minute" received a small shipment of whisky, according to the publican, and he is only too 'appy to serve Old Sarge and the Law a couple of glasses.

On shipboard and in the British towns I visited it was a great thrill to run into lots of Uncle Sam's fighting men who've been reading This Man's War in Liberty. When they found out I was Old Sarge they began to fire questions at me like buckshot.

For example, the crew of the Gesundheit lodged the following complaints with the gripe department (you can't run a war without gripes):

They'd like an increased uniform allowance. As things stand, they complained, it's often necessary to dip into their own pockets to replace their gear.

When they get furloughs they'd like to be put ashore reasonably near home, or be given free transportation and time to go home. Seaman J. S., whose home is on the West Coast, pointed out that he was put ashore on the East Coast for his last furlough and didn't have the time or money to visit home.

The chief petty officers didn't go for the new gray fatigue uniform. They prefer the old khaki. Why, I couldn't find out. It was like asking a dame why she doesn't like a particular hat. She doesn't like it, that's all.

Lastly, the crew of the Gesundheit would like to chew gum. No gum chewing is permitted because a few thoughtless guys used to spit gum out on the decks, and it's mighty hard to remove. The lads said they'd promise to keep gum off the decks if the ban was lifted.

G. I.s in the towns I visited would bunch up around me as if I were the mail orderly. Don't mind telling you I got a whale of a kick out of it.

I FOUND these boys overseas pretty much disgusted with "canteen commandos," those heroes of the Battle of Main Street who parade up to the front lines of the nearest drugstore with their chests full of ribbons. Funny, but you don't see half so many ribbons overseas as you see right here at home. Legitimate ribbons, O. K. But a buck sergeant told me of one canteen commando who actually bought himself a Civil War ribbon, just to increase the peacock array on his chest.

Here's a couple of messages the G. I.s asked me to bring back:

They want more *local* reading matter. They want home-town newspapers and American magazines. You can't expect a guy to curl up for a pleasant hour with Agricultural Statistics, 1941. That was one of the books I saw in a camp library. Previously I've campaigned for

The indignity of it all! Old Sarge coming aboard, but not under his own steam.

easing of the mailing regulations so families can send their boys more home-town papers and periodicals. I still hope something will be done about it.

Increase the cigarette ration. The lads aren't satisfied with the present ration of one pack a day. Everywhere I went they asked me to campaign for two packs a day. One of them said, "If you can't get us two packs a day, Sarge, we'll settle for ten packs a week. But please tell 'em we want more cigarettes."

I devoted one of my shore days to plain rubberneck sightseeing with some of the men from the ship. The Gesundheit was anchored out in the bay, and about one o'clock in the morning our group and about fifty of the crew started back to the ship in a "drifter." It was a sixty-foot boat like a launch, and, incidentally, was one of the craft used in the evacuation of Dunkirk.

As it turned out, it was also used in the evacuation of Old Sarge.

We were all singing lustily, but the bay was in a bad temper. We bounced over five-foot waves. When we reached the Gesundheit we nosed into the blister on the port side. (The blister is the outer shell of the ship, designed to detonate torpedoes before they hit the main hull, and it extends out like a ledge just above the water line.)

A couple of the men managed to get off on the port blister, but the waves were pounding hard and the officer in charge ordered us to try the starboard side. It looked even rougher to me, but a few more men made that nimble leap from the bow of the drifter to the blister.

I was next in line.

THERE was Old Sarge, with that sheepskin sea coat, balancing on the bobbing bow of the drifter waiting for the precise upbeat which would allow a second or two to jump to the blister. Was I uncomfortable? Yes, very.

Out went my left leg. I'm sure it would have been a graceful and effective leap if a big wave hadn't hit at precisely that moment. The drifter lurched away, and for a split second I was like the man on the flying trapeze—only with no trapeze.

I hit the blister a glancing blow, and then old Sarge and the Atlantic Ocean were formally introduced. I felt like I went under about twenty feet. My left shoulder cracked into the side of the Gesundheit and I felt a funny snap.

I don't know why, but I bobbed back up to the surface. That sheepskin coat had soaked up a good part of the Atlantic and when I tried to swim I thought I was towing the Gesundheit.

I managed to paddle my way toward the stern of the drifter so I wouldn't be sandwiched between it and the Gesundheit the next time a wave brought them together. Then I raised my arm and a Marine sergeant named Gatty grabbed it, but the drifter lurched and our hold was broken.

I went under again, for the second time (I've heard it said that in this business three strikes and you're out). After a brief scrape with the barnacles I surfaced again, and this time the boys threw me a rope. Now, as you've gathered, I'm no Olympian when it comes to swimming, and I soon discovered I couldn't keep myself up and grab the rope at the same time. One or the other, but not both. So I decided to keep myself up.

I swam a few more strokes toward the stern of the drifter, and was puffing

(*Continued on page 62*)

THE LION ROARED

Liberty's SHORT SHORT STORY

IF a Mr. P. Alfred Merivale ever passes your way, you'd better let me know—Mike Brock, care of the Taproom, Mark Twain Hotel, South Plains, Missouri. If you meet P. Alfred, it's a cinch you'll take a good look at him. He's a big, substantial, white-haired guy like the kind that's always sitting around sipping mint juleps in the whisky ads.

It was a couple of months ago that he checked in at the Mark Twain. I was behind the bar cutting up fruit, getting set for Cy Archer and Ben Wood and the rest of the gang that drop in around four thirty for old-fashioneds. All of a sudden Timmy the bellboy rushes in, waving a green bill and yelling:

"Say, Mike, this is one for the books! A big shot from Chicago just pulled in, and guess what he asks for. A *suite!* Get a load of that—a *suite!*"

Timmy's laughing, and I get a kick out of it, too. The M. T.'s a mighty fine hotel, but it just doesn't go in for suites or the fancier things in life.

"This dude must have us mixed up with the Waldorf-Astoria," says Timmy. "But you ought to see his bags—three of the smoothest-looking suitcases I've ever had my hands on. And he gave me this buck just for dumping them in his room." Timmy sticks the dollar into a pocket and gets off the stool. He says, "Anyhow, Mike, you'll get a look at this Chicago fellow on account of he's staying two weeks." And then our bellboy breezes out of the bar.

Well, I don't pay much attention to Timmy's story at first, because he gets hysterical when any one gives him more than a two-bit tip, which isn't often. But I begin wondering why a stranger would make a point of sticking around South Plains for two weeks. Don't get me wrong. This is a great little town, if you're born and raised here. Still, compared to Chicago, it's strictly a dyed-in-the-wool whistle stop.

While I'm sabotaging the Chamber of Commerce, the lobby door opens and in walks the biggest and most solid-looking citizen I've ever seen. I size him up from top to bottom—from a dark hat like the sort Anthony Eden wears in the newsreels, to spats. The big guy sits himself at the bar and flashes me a smile.

"I'll take the best whisky you have," he says. "Straight."

As I'm pouring his drink, I say in my most hospitable manner, "You must be the gentleman from Chicago. They tell me you're going to be here for quite a spell."

"For two weeks," he nods. "I'm here for a rest. Doctor's orders." And then he slips off his coat and puts it on the stool beside him.

The minute he straightens up again, I notice something shiny on his suit lapel and I see it's a pin—a gold lion pin. At first I think it's one of those gadgets that college fraternities hand out, but it's too big for that, and I'm about to ask him just what it is. Then I remember I'm the guy who pops olives into martinis, and if the customers go in for screwy jewelry—well, that's none of my business. In the meantime the man from Chicago's keeping up a steady stream of chatter. But the late afternoon mob wander in, and I have to concentrate so hard on juggling glasses and bottles that I put an end to all conversation.

I'm in the midst of shoving a round of old-fashioneds at Cy Archer, Ben Wood, and Luke Williams when I see that my new pal has moved over a few stools and joined them.

"I'd like to introduce myself," he's saying. "I'm P. Alfred Merivale from Chicago."

A great session of handshaking and backslapping follows, and in half an hour they're making jokes a mile a minute, and Mr. Merivale's fat pigskin wallet does the honors on the next round of drinks. Then all of a sudden Cy Archer, our local banker, snatches some words right out of my mouth.

"Tell us about that lion pin you're wearing," he says. "I've never seen anything like it before, Merivale. Where did it come from?"

"Well, it's a funny thing about this pin," answers Mr. Merivale. "Strange as it may seem, I don't really know where it did come from. I was down in Lima about fifteen summers ago and one afternoon I wandered into a little shop and bought a lot of trinkets. When I got back to my room and unwrapped the package, this gold pin was on top. I took it back to the old Peruvian who'd sold the other stuff to me, and he said he'd never laid eyes on the lion before. So the only thing for me to do was to keep it."

"Why do you wear it?" Luke Williams asks. "Any special reason?"

The big man turns on his smile full blast. "That's another funny story. I suppose I started wearing it because I was impressed with the strange way it appeared out of nowhere. But it turned out to be the luckiest little pin anybody ever wore. I—er—well—" Mr. Merivale acted like he didn't quite know how to say what was coming up. "Well, gentleman, I realize this is something one doesn't usually discuss, but I've been extremely successful. The reason I mention it is because of the pin. From the second I first saw the lion, the brakes have come my way

Lucky pieces are a dime a dozen, but in the whistle-stop town of South Plains, P. Alfred's lion pin was something special

BY VIRGINIA EISEMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

"The breaks have come my way. And it's all due to this little pin here."

in everything—oil wells, mines, the stock market, just everything. And it's all due to this little pin here."

"You wouldn't care to swap lions in midstream, would you, Merivale?" asks Cy Archer. "My granddaughter has a stuffed one and I bet I could get her to trade with you. We could use some luck for a change."

Mr. Merivale switches his smile to a laugh. "I'm a superstitious cuss and I wouldn't part with it for anything in the world." Then he notices me. I guess I'm practically leaning into his glass. "Give us another round, will you, Mike?" he says.

Well, during the next week he and his gold lion spend a lot of time with me in the taproom. He does his wining here and his dining with the Archers, the Williamses, and the other South Plains socialites. The number of friends he collects makes Dale Carnegie look like an amateur, and it's all on account of the pin.

ONE morning as I'm hauling cartons of pretzels to the back of the bar, Timmy collides with me. "Did you hear the news about Mr. Merivale?" he pants. "He's lost his lion pin."

Right then and there you could have taken one of those pretzels and knocked me over with it. It seems that the last Mr. Merivale remembers seeing his pin is at the church social the night before, and now he's offering a thousand-dollar reward to anyone who finds it. He's buying a full-page ad in the weekly paper, Timmy tells me.

I feel mighty sorry for Mr. Merivale, who strikes me as being the most high-class bar fly I've ever met up with. Then I think long and hard about the thousand bucks which wouldn't do the family kitty of one Mike Brock any harm at all.

Finally, I can't help wondering if the pin is lost, strayed, or stolen. Cy Archer's crack about wanting it comes back to me along with a bunch of others that I've heard.

Mr. Merivale shows up the same as usual later in the day. "Maybe I'm carrying this thing too far," he says to the gang. "You fellows must think I'm crazy to promise such a big reward, because the lion's certainly worth no more than a dollar or two. Still, it's the sentimental value that counts. I've got to go back to Chicago at the end of the week, and I'm hoping the pin will go with me."

"Don't worry, Alf, we'll find it for you," pipes up Cy Archer.

But we don't find it. Mr. Merivale's loss is the town topic all right. People meander about with their eyes glued to the ground, and yet nothing happens—nothing, that is, except the day of P. Alfred's departure rolls around. Right after Timmy brings down his bags, the big man himself comes into the bar.

"I just had to drop in for a quick one," he says. "I couldn't leave South Plains without telling you good-by, Mike."

I make it clear how sorry I am to see him go, and then we get on the subject of his lion pin.

"That thousand-dollar reward still holds," he tells me. "If you ever hit upon a clue, Mike, you can reach me at the Brownstone in Chicago."

Well, the town seems pretty dreary without Mr. Merivale. Now and then somebody mentions the gold pin, but it still doesn't show up. The crew that's good for a daily old-fashioned or two act like there's been a death in the family—they're that fond of P. Alfred. They all keep saying how they wish he'd come back.

One afternoon Cy Archer hasn't dropped in yet, but the rest of his cronies are already in a huddle at the bar. Ben Wood has the inspiration that maybe Merivale would like to join them on the fishing trip they're cooking up. Everybody seconds the motion. I don't wait to find out if they're going to phone P. Alfred long distance because I notice a weird character standing at the end of the bar. He's obviously a member of the school that doesn't believe in haircuts or shaves. I say to myself that I'm now laying eyes on the original washed-up wreck.

"You'd better move along, Bud," I tell him in a polite way.

"Give me a shot of whisky," he says.

I'm about to recommend Harry's Tavern on the other side of town when my eyes almost pop out of my head. There, sitting on top of a patch in this bum's jacket, is Mr. Merivale's gold lion. As fast as I can get the words out, I ask the tramp where he got it.

"Found it by the railroad tracks," is his answer.

I guess I'm making a lot of noise, so some people wander over to see what's up. In the beginning they think they ought to make a mass beeline to the oculist, but Ben Wood is finally willing to believe what he sees. When he asks the guy how much he wants for the pin, they all get busy, and there follows the liveliest auction that's ever taken place in South Plains.

The tramp admits the lion doesn't mean a thing to him. Still, he says, it must mean something to somebody or there wouldn't be all this fuss, and he tells the boys he won't sell it for a cent under five hundred dollars in cash. With a checkbook in one hand and a pen in the other, Luke Williams dashes into the lobby and he's back in a minute with a wad of bills. They go straight into the bum's grimy fist and in exchange Luke gets the gold pin. Nobody gives a hoot when the tramp slips out now; they've lost interest in him.

I'm all for calling Mr. Merivale right away, but Luke wants to buy every one in the bar a drink first.

"I'm still about four hundred and ninety dollars ahead!" he shouts. "And think how happy this is going to make Alf!"

AS I'm knocking myself out setting them up, I see Cy Archer come in with a grin on his face. Luke gives him the high sign, can't wait to tell him the news, but Cy has some words of his own to get in edgewise.

"You'll never believe it, boys," he wheezes. "It's a miracle—an absolute miracle! I just met some broken-down bum outside, and you'll never guess what I bought from him!"

We hicks may not be Quiz Kids, but that was a five-hundred-dollar question that didn't stump any of us. And if Mr. P. Alfred Merivale is as smart as I know he is, he won't ever again pick South Plains for a rest cure or come sauntering into the Mark Twain looking for a suite.

THE END

President Roosevelt favors the free and easy style of press conference.

PRESS ASSOCIATION

Cordell Hull holds owl-solemn meetings with the press each day.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Some fancy lip-work goes on when the great and near great meet the press. A peek behind the scenes with a star Washington newsman

ANTHONY EDEN, preparing to leave for his first official visit to the United States, met a friend who had just returned from America. The British Foreign Secretary listened attentively as the friend detailed the snares and pitfalls which awaited an unwary Briton. Finally, the friend fixed Eden with a stern stare and said:

"And you must be prepared for your conference with the press in Washington."

This worried Eden so much that he thought of almost nothing else on the trip over. He tried to anticipate all the profound questions which could be asked by an inquisitive press. He made up answers. Then he thought of the questions which could be asked about his answers.

When he finally faced the corps of correspondents in Washington, he braced himself manfully for the first searching question. Then a girlish voice piped forth:

"Mr. Eden, how many children do you have?"

He was so surprised that he couldn't remember and one of his aides had to prompt him.

Eden's introduction to Washington's most popular journalistic indoor sport proved one contention long advanced by Capital reporters—there is no such thing as preparing for a press conference. Once an official has put himself at the mercy of the correspondents, anything can happen. Secretary of Labor Perkins conducts her press conferences almost as if she were on trial for her life. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau gives the impression that he would be more comfortable if the reporters had been searched for concealed weapons. Secretary of War Stimson is so wary of the press that he insists that questions be submitted in advance in writing.

Almost every high ranking official has a regular press conference at which correspondents can ask any question, pertinent or impertinent, and there are as many ways of conducting a press conference as there are of cooking an egg. The general tone of a conference will be established by the official, but the details of the production will be taken care of by the facile-minded reporters. Some of the techniques developed by reporters for trapping the innocent would do credit to Machiavelli.

Republican National Chairman Harrison Spangler made this discovery when reporters tempted him out on the end of a limb with an inquiry about the soldier vote. They went to work with innocent questions, which elicited from him the declaration that the Republicans had been surveying political sentiment in the Army. Demands for an investigation arose immediately from Democratic quarters, and harried Republican press experts got out a statement explaining what Mr. Spangler had really meant. Privately, they volunteered the opinion that their boss should, while conducting a press conference from the end of a limb, listen carefully for the sound of saws.

Political fortunes sometimes are made or wrecked through press conferences. Governor Dewey of New York was regarded for a long time by Washington political writers as an interesting and ambitious young man who might be a Presidential possibility in 1948. But when they met him at a press conference at the Republican conclave on Mackinac Island, he made such a strong impression that they launched what turned out to be the real Dewey boom for 1944. On the other hand, Paul McNutt came to Washington as an accepted Presidential possibility, but faded with the years. This was largely because he was evasive and hostile at his press conferences—so much so, in fact, that OWI Director Elmer Davis reprimanded him publicly.

President Roosevelt for many years conducted the model press conference. He came like a fresh breeze in summer to Washington reporters, who had been practically locked out of the White House in the last days of the Hoover administration. The President favors the free and easy style of press conference, and until wartime caution imposed restrictions, the White House conferences were open to all accredited reporters. They are held twice a week, alternately in the morning and afternoon so that morning and evening papers will take turns getting the break on the news. The correspondents bunch up outside the door to the President's office and, if the door doesn't open on time, they beat upon it irreverently.

The President usually keeps the proceedings in a light vein, and the correspondents have no inhibitions about wise-cracking back. Mr. Roosevelt started one of his conferences with the statement that he didn't think he had much news on hand.

"I have a number of hens setting, but they have laid no eggs yet," he explained.

"Do setting hens lay eggs?" chided a reporter.

"Is the appointment of a food czar one of the eggs on which the hens are setting?" asked another.

"I'm not going to tell too much about my hens," replied the President.

"Is the Hatch Act stopping you?" asked pert Elizabeth Mae Craig, the leading punster of the conferences.

A Presidential wisecrack will sometimes make more news than would a sober reply. When reporters were trying to dig something out of the President after the Doolittle raid on Tokyo, he volunteered to tell them the spot from which the American planes had taken off.

HARRIS & EWING

Secretary Ickes is the fastest man with a comeback in all Washington.

ACME PHOTOS

Knox's news conferences produce more than other Cabinet officers.

HIGH LIGHTS

BY ALFRED TOOMBS

"Where?" asked the bug-eyed correspondents.

"Shangri-La," said the President, and another word was incorporated into the nation's wartime vocabulary.

The President sometimes has the wise-cracks turned in his own direction. A reporter, trying to find out about White House plans for handling one of the John L. Lewis crises, asked:

"What will be done if Lewis doesn't sign?"

"What would you do?" asked Mr. Roosevelt.

"I don't know," replied the reporter. "I'm not President."

The President sometimes abandons good humor entirely at his press conferences. He has long been irritated at certain newspapers because of their hostility to his foreign policies. This expressed itself in outright anger at the end of one of his press conferences when he turned to Earl Godwin, the radio commentator, handed him a German Iron Cross, and asked him to give it to John O'Donnell, Washington columnist for the New York Daily News, in recognition of something that had appeared in O'Donnell's column.

THE light tone of the reporters' questions and the Presidential answers is generally a cover for a pretty serious battle of wits. For two years before the 1940 Presidential campaign, the correspondents tried unceasingly to find out whether Mr. Roosevelt would run for a third term. The first time the question was put, he suggested that the correspondent don a dunce cap and stand in the corner. In the months that followed, practically every other reporter attending the conference tried, without success, to catch the President off base on the third-term question. It was not until the very day when the President's name was to be submitted to the Democratic convention that a persistent correspondent, making a hopeless last try, got an answer to the question.

In direct contrast to the good-natured Presidential press conference is the owl-solemn meeting which takes place at noon each day between Secretary of State Hull and the correspondents. They stand up when Mr. Hull appears, ask a few dignified questions, and then depart to try to figure out what his diplomatic double-talk actually meant. The decorum of these brief meetings has only been disturbed once. That was after I. F. Stone of the PM Washington staff had persisted for weeks in asking sharp questions about our French North Africa policies. Hull flared up one day and cross-examined Stone about his background. Later he made a somewhat apologetic explanation of the incident.

The rather painful atmosphere of Mr. Hull's press conferences is nothing like that which traditionally obtains in sessions sponsored by foreign diplomatic missions in Washington. The diplomats normally stage social press conferences and in the dear, dead days of peace they set a lavish table. The Belgians served strawberries and cream, the Chinese laid out hors d'oeuvres with their cocktails, and the Spanish Loyalists, even in the last hours of their regime, served Scotch and soda.

Naturally, these diplomatic conferences are well attended. One day Blair Bolles of The Washington Star was informed that he was to go to the Finnish Ministry at 4 o'clock for a conference with the Finnish Minister. This was in the days of the first Finnish-Russian war and the correspondents had been anxious to arrange a conference with Hjalmar Procope, the Finnish representative. Bolles decided that other reporters in the State Department might want to know that Procope was available and put a notice up on the bulletin board in the press room. That afternoon, Bolles—followed by a dozen other reporters—rang the doorbell at the Ministry and was greeted by an obviously surprised Procope. He said he hadn't planned a press conference, but invited the correspondents in, ordered whisky sours all around, and answered all questions. As the reporters were leaving he drew Bolles aside and said:

"I don't know how all these other men found out about this. I told your editor I would give you this interview alone if you would come up this afternoon."

The diplomatic missions generally arrange conferences for visiting dignitaries from their homelands, and those are often conducted through an interpreter. On one occasion the late Premier of Poland, Wladislav Sikorski, fenced with the correspondents for nearly an hour through an interpreter. As they were leaving, he thanked them in near-perfect English—and they tumbled to the fact that he had been using the time required by interpretation to think out his answers carefully.

WHEN General Henri Giraud visited Washington, the War Department arranged a press conference for him. But Army officers warned the reporters not to ask him any questions about the ticklish French political situation. Obediently they confined their inquiries to military matters. Then, as they were about to leave, Giraud suddenly started, without prompting, an excited statement of his view of the French political set-up. The reporters had to help some of the Army press officers out of the room.

At almost every press conference there will be a few barbed questions. Occasionally the entire conference will be devoted to heckling. Paul McNutt summoned reporters hurriedly after Elmer Davis had criticized his handling of the press. The reporters arrived in a belligerent mood. McNutt said the faults in his press relations were attributable to the manpower shortage—he didn't have enough people to get out the news.

"How many men in your press section, Governor?" a reporter inquired sympathetically.

"There are five, I believe," said McNutt.

"Five men?" the reporter said incredulously.

"That's right," said McNutt, feeling that he'd found a friend in the crowd.

"Then," cracked the reporter, "can

(*Continued on page 66*)

BESSIE ARBRUSTER GOES A-SCUTTLIN'

BY RONALD G. SERCOMBE

ILLUSTRATED BY CARL MUELLER

Bessie pinch-hits for the Coast Guard and outmaneuvers a burning ship with a cargo of TNT. Another exciting story from the log of a swashbuckling female skipper

BESSIE ARBRUSTER made a vicious swipe at the bar with a rag. Then she examined the rag closely. "Got him," she said triumphantly.

Doc Harrison, who had been talking with a young lad in seaman's outfit, his gnarled fingers wrapped around a tall glass of brandy-and-soda, glanced up.

"You have the most irritating way," he said gruffly, "of disrupting a thought. Why don't you go out on the pier and swat them?"

Bessie glared at him as an irritated bass might glare at a minnow. Then she relaxed.

"Fer all you know," she commented, "he might o' been full o' malaria germs. Then where'd you be?"

"Ultimately home in bed, dosed up with quinine."

Somebody dropped a nickel in the juke box and a corny band started blaring The White Cliffs of Dover.

Several couples started dancing and a leathery-faced gangling character of solid salt attempted the sailor's hornpipe with high boots. It was Monday night, ordinarily a dull time at taverns, but not at the Angler's Inn.

The lad seated on the bar stool beside Doc Harrison sipped his ale slowly and a faraway look came into his blue eyes. "I've seen 'em a hundred—nay—two hundred times, and in the sunlight they're beautiful," he said.

"What's that?" asked Doc sharply.

"The Dover cliffs. I say they're beautiful. You ought to see them, you ought."

Doc nodded. "I have. I've cruised all around England. By the way, I've neglected to introduce you to my best friend. She runs this joint and tries to run the island. Come up here, Bess," he ordered. "Want you to meet a friend of mine."

Bessie's amputated gum boots squeaked and her salt-incrusted dungarees rustled noisily as she approached.

"This is David MacAfee," said Doc. "He's in the engine room aboard the City of Glasgow. He's had two tankers shot out from under him."

Bessie extended a large pudgy hand.

"How d'ye do, ma'am?" said MacAfee embarrassedly.

"Fine," said Bessie, beaming. "If I recollect rightly, the Glasgow's down't Tucker Island having her bottom scraped now. That right?"

MacAfee coughed and raised his eyes shyly.

"Well, she's afloat now," he said, "and we're haulin' anchor pretty soon. Course I can't say what her load is or where we're headed . . ."

"Ye don't have to apologize, lad," Bessie said. "More power to ye. Here, have one on the house."

Charlie, Bessie's angular lethargic aide-de-camp, strolled up and touched her on the shoulder.

"Phone," said Charlie. "Think's Crosby."

Commander Crosby's voice was crisp and there were no preliminaries.

"Where can we get a tug pronto, Bessie?"

"Good evenin', commandant. I was jest . . ."

"Stow it. A tug, Bess. And quick!"

"Try Old Man Moselem."

"I did. He's aground off Beach Haven. I need a tug, or two tugs, within half an hour at this base."

"Can't be done. There ain't none wid wings on 'em, sir."

"That's all I wanted to know. You were my last bet. Now listen closely, Bess. Open up all the windows in the tavern and stay away from them. Spread the word over the island. Hell's about to pop! The City of Glasgow is on fire. It's in the hold. She's packed from stem to stern with TNT. There were only a dozen crewmen aboard her when it started. The rest are on shore leave. These men cast her adrift, thinking she would roll seaward. But we— Are you listening?"

"Cripes, yes!"

"They didn't notify me until half an hour after they'd cut her loose. By that time the wind had changed—something they failed to figure on. She's a quarter mile off Tucker Island now and moving directly south toward Atlantic City. If she piles up on the shore it'll be another Halifax or Black Tom!"

"Good guppy!"

"I can't talk longer, Bessie. Warn the people, but don't give them all the details. And, Bessie, if you can round up a tug, God bless you, I'll get you a medal."

"Whyncha use the big Coast Guard torpeddy boat?"

"It's down at Cape May, together with the rest of my fleet and all but three of my men. Maneuvers today. And they took most of the Glasgow's crew down there as a good-will gesture. Good-by, Bess. Do what you can."

The phone clicked ominously.

"Scared?" Crosby asked Bessie. "Reckon I am, a little," she said.

BESSIE walked back to the bar. She stared at Doc for a moment and then seemed to emerge from a dense fog.

"Charlie!" she bawled, her voice drowning out the juke-box jargon.

"Shut that joke box off. Now ever'body listen. I gotta break up this party. Git to yer homes as fast as ye kin skedaddle. Then open the doors 'n' windows wide 'n' stay away from 'em. Any drinks 'at're left you kin collect tomorrow night . . . I hope."

There was a rising chorus of protests and demands for an explanation. Dramatically, Bessie swept her arm around

Crosby and Bessie saw Dave swing perilously from the ladder for a moment and then move upward.

in a wide arc. Four beer mugs crashed on the floor, ruining the dramatic effect.

"All I kin tell you is this," she roared. "There's a ship loose offshore—mebbe a coupla miles—mebbe closer. It's loaded with powder and it's on fire. Now git home. Commandant Crosby's orders."

Her statement had the effect of a stiff electric jolt. Eyes met eyes across tables, and expressions were frozen into a mixture of alarm and bewilderment. Then, one by one and couple by couple, they started leaving.

"Git on the phone, Charlie," ordered Bessie. "Call the Barkentine operator and tell her wot you jest heard me say. An' tell her to phone all the houses she can and warn the people. An' tell her to tell the raddio broadcastin' station. Step on it!"

DOC HARRISON edged over, looking worried.

"What ship, Bess?" he inquired.

"City o' Glasgow," Bessie whispered hoarsely, glancing to see what MacAfee was doing. He was absorbed in a map. "If she rides closer to shore," Bessie added, "it'll be another Hallowfacts or Black Tom."

Doc shook his shaggy head grimly.

"What would Crosby have us do besides sit and wait?"

Bessie told him about the tugs.

"Impossible," said Doc impatiently. "None available within ten miles. And besides, who'd be damn fool enough to take them out?"

Bessie nodded sadly. She ambled over to the screen door, dungarees swishing, and her eyes roved over moonlit Arbruster Bay. Her nautical wheels began turning at full speed, calculating tides, currents, and wind.

"Doc!" she snapped, doing a rapid about-face. "The Lark's got fifty horsepower."

"Ye-up. And my New Arrival's got seventy horses. With one hundred and twenty horses, we *might*—I say *might*—move ten thousand or more tons."

Bessie chewed thoughtfully and then snapped her gum.

"Pedigo's Sweet Alice has got fifty Diesel horses."

"That half-baked tourist baiter would never go unless there was cash behind it. You know that."

"He's a weasel, all right," she agreed, "but I gotta way of workin' on him. Now git that jaloppy of yourn and h'ist me up to Pedigo's Pier."

MacAfee looked up from his map.

"I'll warm up the Lark," he said quietly.

"Mister," said Bessie, "you must o' got rabbit ears. I don't know . . ."

"It's my ship. I'm going," said MacAfee firmly.

"Aye-aye," snapped Bessie, and then she beamed at him and saluted.

CLAD immaculately in cream-colored slacks and powder-blue shirt open at the neck, Pedigo was counting the day's receipts when Doc and Bessie piled in on him. His eyes flickered astonishment and then became veiled and sarcastic.

"Such an honor," he said bitingly. "I hear your customers aren't catching any fish. I suppose you want to buy some for them to take home to their wives."

"Clear out this here barroom," Bessie ordered harshly, "and close up this joint."

"Gad," he exploded, "you sound just like Pappy used to! Like bull, like heifer."

"You listen," Bessie said, inching up to him. Pedigo listened. His face became serious and he ordered Shorty, his bait

cutter, to hurry out on the pier and drive in the night fishermen. Then he closed the bar and doused the lights.

"Now where's the catch?" he asked. "You didn't come up here to warn me on account of you love me. I know that."

"Git the Sweet Alice rollin' an' highball over to Arbruster Bay," Bessie snapped. "We're gonna take her an' the New Arrival an' the Lark an' we're gonna tow the City o' Glasgow three miles out. We're goin' a-scuttlin'."

For a fleeting moment a glint of admiration shone in Pedigo's black eyes. Then he burst out laughing.

"I always knew you were practically nuts, Bessie," he said. "I never was sure about you, Doc, until now. Go on. Blow yourselves to Camden. But count me out. I never found flag waving paid much."

"Why—you—" Doc advanced menacingly, fists clenched.

Bessie shoved him aside roughly.

"Told you he didn't have any guts, Doc," she said abruptly. "Pappy allus told me Pedigo was jest a spineless pigfish. Sweet Alice wouldn't be much good, anyhow. Them Diesel horses ain't got push. C'm'on, Doc."

Jelly beans of perspiration popped out on Pedigo's forehead.

"Asides," Bessie continued, "whadda we care if'n he loses his pier? An' if the Glasgow blows, every pier atween here and Ocean City'll tumble in the drink."

Pedigo, with all his faults, had two molten spots in his metallic heart—his boat and his pier.

"Wait!" he ordered hoarsely. "I'll see you at your docks in ten minutes. Gotta gas up."

"If you ain't there," said Bessie, "we won't wait."

"Ye-up," Bessie went on, as they sped back, "Pappy allus told me to make a study of varmints and their weaknesses. It comes in useful."

SLUMBERING gulls hauled their downy heads from feathery beds half an hour later as the combined roar of one hundred and seventy "horses" reverberated across glassy Arbruster Bay.

The Lark broke the way through the inky water with impatient eagerness. In her phosphorescent wake came the heavily gadgeted Sweet Alice, and close on her stern, Doc and his trim little New Arrival. Pedigo had talked Shorty into joining him. MacAfee rode with Doc, and Bessie was alone.

At Weakfish Thoroughfare Inlet, Bessie flashed a warning signal with her stern light and cut motor. She yelled through a megaphone, "Tide's low and still incomin'. I'm takin' the short cut over Wreck Bay to the Coast Guard basin. I short-waved Crosby to be ready fer us. Cut yer motors at Channel Marker Seven and yer sterns'll raise for the sand bar."

The Lark zoomed ahead at about eighteen knots. Bessie swung the searchlight so it illumined the black channel banks. Its rays picked up a red cross attached to a tall pole. Abruptly she cut her motors. Then she braced herself and waited.

The Lark's stern rose until she was riding even keel. She rolled smoothly ahead. Bessie's sigh of relief was like that of a panting locomotive. She swung the searchlight aft and its rays picked up the Sweet Alice and the New Arrival. Bessie saw them maneuver the bar safely and then set throttle at full speed ahead.

The big searchlight in the Coast Guard basin threw a path of silver to the docks. Commander Crosby and three coast guards—the only ones remaining at base—were waiting for them.

They had hauled a mess of equipment down to the docks. These included heavy rope bumpers, similar to the type used by tugs, a rope ladder, fire extinguishers, oxygen masks, raincoats, boots, a life-saving mortar, and life preservers.

"God bless you, Bess," Commander Crosby said fervently. "I hope it's not too late."

He turned to his men.

"Equip the boats," he ordered; then added to Bessie, "We'll take over from here on. Skipper Herman and several of his men will arrive on planes within an hour."

"Ye can't leave the base unguarded, commandant," Bessie said severely. "Doc 'n' Pedigo 'n' me got this assignment and neither hell ner high water ner you is stoppin' us."

"Bessie, I can't permit . . ."

"Lark's a peculiar crittur. Her battery's bum and her carburetor chokes. No one but me knows how to handle her. Same thing wid the New Arrival."

Crosby sighed. "You win. But I go with you. The Lark will be the flagship."

"Aye-aye, sir," said Bessie, beaming.

The Lark churned ahead.

"Ye really shouldn't come, commandant," said Bessie seriously. "I'm explicable, but you ain't."

"You mean expendable, Bess," Commander Crosby said. "But we're all expendable these days."

In less than five minutes they were snorting through the rip at Barkentine Inlet. Crosby busied himself with binoculars.

"New Arrival and Sweet Alice half a mile astern, Bess," he said. "And ahead I see . . . I see . . ."

"This ain't no time for a quizzer program," said Bessie sharply; then added politely, "sir."

"Two points off starboard bow," said Crosby, his voice tense. "About three miles off, Bess. She's burning faster. Give the Lark all she's got."

Crosby fidgeted with the short-wave set and started talking.

"Doc Harrison and Pedigo," he said. "Calling the New Arrival and the Sweet Alice. Commander Crosby speaking. Are you receiving?"

He snapped a switch.

"Yeah. O. K.," came Pedigo's hard voice.

"Roger," said Doc clearly.

Crosby resumed transmitting.

"City of Glasgow about three miles south-southeast. Burning fast. The Lark will maneuver to her port bow. I'll board her. The New Arrival and the Sweet Alice take positions to stern and push directly east. The Lark will tow from the bow. Those are orders. Any questions?"

The radio commenced chattering and Crosby switched a lever.

". . . and he insists on going aboard," came Doc's voice. "Says he knows her from fo'c'sle to poop deck and topmast to ballast tanks. Knows the location of all sea cocks. What do you say, commander?"

Crosby switched over.

"Who are you talking about, Doc?"

"David MacAfee," came Doc's voice. "He says it's his ship and he wants the honor. Says if you won't give him permission he'll swim for it when we reach her and stay on her to the end."

"Put him on," Crosby snapped.

The quiet modulated voice of David MacAfee came to them clearly.

"From here, sirr," he said, "it looks like the worst parrt of the blaze is toward the stern. I can mount her amidships, sirr. With a good flashlight and a mask I can make my way down t' the for'ard ballast tanks. Right by these tanks, sirr, are two big valves. Skipper Herman told me about them, sirr. I open them and she'll flood and sink in half an hour."

Crosby snapped a switch. "How about the heat down there?"

MacAfee replied with a chuckle, "I didna hear you worryin' aboot that, sirr."

"Very good," said Crosby. "And good luck, David. Would you like my assistance?"

"Thank you, sirr, but I think I'd wurrk better alone."

Crosby shut off the radio.

"Lord luv him," said Bessie. "He's a real sailor."

Now they were within a mile of the City of Glasgow. A vast churning black cloud rolled above and to her stern.

CROSBY studied the scene through the glasses. Then he said ominously: "I would take her to be drifting at about two knots. At that rate she would pile up on the inlet rocks in half an hour. We've got to work fast, Bessie."

"Aye-aye, sir."

Crosby glanced at her briefly. "Scared?" he asked quietly.

"Reckon I am, a little," she said honestly.

Crosby patted her broad back. "You've got more intestinal fortitude than ninety per cent of the men I command," he said gruffly. "I'm scared too, Bess. But if it happens, it'll be over so quickly . . ."

Sparks tore skyward from the City of Glasgow, followed by V-shaped tongues of red and orange flame. Bessie grabbed Crosby's arm and held her breath.

Now they were within two hundred yards of the Glasgow and the smoke smudge crossed their bow, blotting out the rays from the big searchlight. Bessie continued full speed ahead through the choking screen and, just as Crosby was about to reach for the throttle, she cut the motors and swerved sharply to starboard.

Bessie swung the searchlight around. Its rays penetrated the smoke screen and stopped short as they came up against the massive bow of the Glasgow, less than twenty-five feet from the Lark. The fire seemed to be concentrated in her stern.

"There's a rope ladder amidships," said Bessie. "Reckon Dave kin mount it."

She pressed a button firmly and the raucous blare of the Lark's horn split the salt air. Almost immediately an answering blare came from the Sweet Alice and, right after that, a tuneful collegiate beep from the New Arrival. Bessie grabbed the megaphone.

"We're over here, off her bow," she bawled. "Take it easy in the smoke."

A sharp gust of wind dissipated the

(*Continued on page 72*)

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

The only difference between a rut and a grave is their dimensions.

—Ellen Glasgow.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

BY LT. MAX MILLER, U.S.N.R.

It is D-Day—day of climax for all on the carrier as the enemy's island stronghold is struck. A torpedo bomber starts its take-off run.

PART FOUR—CONCLUSION

A CARRIER'S pattern of operations on D-Day reaches beyond the surface. It extends as far as its farthest plane extends, as high as allowed by the oxygen tanks.

From the carrier threads are started, and it is to her that they intermittently return. Back and forth they go, and in and out, and yet the weaving is so spacious and so complex that no individual can hope to follow each strand of it. Such is D-Day.

One pilot had returned later than the others of the first wave. We had given him up. We already had learned that our pilots on their first run had done a great job. We had stared at the clock, we had hugged around a little radio in the radio-room, we had watched the teletypes on the screen in the ready-rooms.

"They're coming back! They're ours and they're coming back!"

Once again, then, we scrambled up into the island structure, and by the time we got there a squadron already was circling the carrier for the first landings. As each plane landed and then taxied up past us, we would look both at the pilot and for damage. Usually the pilot, relieved at being aboard again, would throw a thumb up and grin.

Those who were hurt did not have to say so. It was written all over their faces. Or else the pilot's first gesture would be to motion quickly back toward his rear-seat gunner.

The flight surgeon and his assistants were on the flight deck forward all the time, awaiting each plane. The planes were one big confusing cluster to us from our distance up in the island.

"Who's the doc helping to get out?"

"Can't tell from here."

"Looks like Mike's plane. Isn't that his number?"

"Can't—can't tell from here—might be. Damned if I don't think it is."

In this manner the morning continued. Some of the pilots whom we thought we had lost were later reported to have been forced to land on other carriers. Others of our pilots were reported flying in good shape when last seen, but now were reported nowhere.

But, everything considered, we had to admit it had been a good morning, especially when compared to what it could have been. Still—

"Clear flight deck for emergency landing! Stand clear of all runways!"

> It's D-Day at last and the carrier's planes take the air to fulfill her mission. Watch the story unfold from the "island"—and fly a bombing run over Jap territory

And this was when the otherwise lost pilot did such a beautiful job of it, the job which should have been the finale to any D-Day. He circled the carrier to show his condition to the flight officers and to receive their signaled orders. He was at the bottom of his gas, his landing hook as well as his flaps had been shot away, and his brakes were gone. Undoubtedly there were other troubles as well.

The flight officers had to take everything into consideration and make their decision quickly.

"Here he comes—right in the groove! Here he comes—"

He had nothing to stop his speed except his own maneuverability and whatever he could use for brakes. But our combined prayers may have had something to do with slowing down that plane. It came up to the first barrier, caught it by the propeller, tipped slightly onto its nose. But there it stayed.

The pilot was left sitting at a high funny angle. He remained sitting up there motionless, as if amazed, as if surely expecting there was still going to be more to it than that.

As soon as we could believe it ourselves we cheered him. We shouted to him. And the highly perched pilot finally heard us. He looked up, saw us lined *en masse* around the island, and then he did what should be the finale to anything. He bowed. It wasn't a good bow. But it was as good as his harness would permit.

A FEW of the rest of us were permitted to fly today on the afternoon wave, and we, the privileged ones, quickly emptied our pockets of miscellany and borrowed what toggery we could in the readyroom. The new orders were being teletyped on the screen for our wave. It was "our" wave now, and we felt the responsibility, and once again came the familiar order: PILOTS MAN YOUR PLANES.

We scrambled out the rear door of the readyroom, and continued scrambling single file across the same old dark catwalk beneath the flight deck.

"Woops—sorry I bumped yuh." Then a laugh. "Oh, so it's you. Well, then, I'm not sorry. I take it all back. Who you flying with?"

"With Willie."

"Then you're a sucker. He'll toss you overboard when things get tough."

"That's what *he* says he'll do. But he won't."

"Why won't he?"

"I've got his extra goggles."

"Never thought of that. Well, here's to bombs in your eye."

Willie himself emerged from the tunnel and climbed the brief ladder to the

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Wallace Boren (seated) and Lyman Wood, founders of a mail-order religion.

POSTAL PARSONS

BY STACEY HICKS

"New-Way" prayers give comfort and guidance to thousands daily. What are they? The story of two men who turned a post office into a pulpit

WITH a post office for a pulpit, Lyman P. Wood and Wallace R. Boren of Noroton, Connecticut, have made the world their parish. They run a global prayer circle known as Life-Study Fellowship.

On Sunday its members go to church separately as Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, etc. Three times every day they join together as parishioners in Life-Study Fellowship to pray for guidance, courage, and strength.

There are 100,000 of them. Their homes are Texas ranch houses and California villas, huts in Haiti, jerry-built structures in Pennsylvania mining towns, sky-seeking apartments in New York City, and fine squared dwellings on the village greens of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. They live as near as next door and as far away as Angus, Scotland, or Aruba, Dutch West Indies. The Golden Rule is their guide.

The old-time parson, on regular walks around his tiny parish, would visit each member of his flock, solving problems, spreading cheer, and inspiring faith. Wood and Boren perform the same pastoral duties, but because their parish stretches from continent to continent, they call by mail. It takes $15,000 worth of stamps a year just to send their letters, lessons, special prayers, and Faith, a quarterly magazine, to Fellowship's 100,000.

The postal parsons have made these printed and typewritten chats as personal as any exchange of words over a cup of tea, but they themselves are anonymous. To their flock Wood and Boren are simply a signature: "Your friends in Life-Study Fellowship."

In person, they are advertising men whose own church attendance is infrequent. Wood is thirty-three, slender, shy, and rather handsome. Boren, eleven years older, is a sturdy homespun extrovert. Wood, whose family brought him up, is a dreamer; Boren brought himself up and is primarily a practical man. He was born on a Texas ranch, worked his way through high school and the University of California (until he left to join the Navy in World War I), and today has reached a prosperous pinnacle in New York's advertising world. On the side he is a literary Scattergood Baines who dispenses homely philosophy in the column Wally's Wagon in This Week Sunday magazine.

Although they live in the same suburban area of Stamford, Connecticut, they didn't meet until both were working for the advertising firm of J. Walter Thompson in New York City. In 1939 they decided, as a sort of spare-time hobby, to discover why less than half of the American people go to church when, as Wood says, "religion is so essential." Working evenings in a room in Wood's 187-year-old home on the Boston Post Road, they combined the techniques which made this country smile-conscious, and the methods which made Sears Roebuck, with a modernized interpretation of the Bible.

That hobby, only four years later, is Life-Study Fellowship, a nonsectarian religious organization, with a $100,000-a-year budget. (Each of the 100,000 members contributes about $1 a year.) Fellowship's teachings can be summed up in three quotations:

"With God all things are possible."

"Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you."

"God helps them that help themselves."

Since Fellowship's inception, Noroton's post office has risen in status from fourth class to second, and the Woods have moved three blocks away because all three stories of their house are taken up by Fellowship and twenty-five full-time workers. Boren has become a kind of one-man board of directors who convenes infrequently, while Wood, who took charge more and more as the experiment expanded, now does little else. Fellowship is his work.

Wood early developed a desire to help the human race. When he graduated from the University of Vermont and got a job near Lake Champlain, he was convinced he could teach people to dive by mail. He never got around to it, for he moved on to Boston to sell cars person-to-person. About that time he dedicated himself to outlining the perfect federal government, but this he has given up.

At certain solemn moments Wood has been heard to say: "Sometimes I think I was meant to be a minister." In any earlier century he would have been. From the time the Rev. George Phillips came over on the Arabella, ministers and educators have been branching off the Wood family tree, with founders of Andover and Exeter, charter members of Harvard, and, not so long ago, Bishop Phillips Brooks of Trinity Church in Boston.

Wood married Mary Poling, daughter of Dr. Daniel A. Poling, pastor of the Baptist Temple in Philadelphia, editor of the Christian Herald, and president of the World's Christian Endeavor Union. They have two young children, a son and a daughter. Mrs. Wood, a graduate of the University of Vermont, where she met her husband, and a postgraduate of the Simmons School of Social Work, divides her time between bringing up the children and helping to run the Fellowship office force.

Wood guides Life-Study Fellowship's far-flung members from an office of the top floor of World Headquarters. He plans each issue of Faith by pretending he is a parson who can go right into every home. "Then I think of ways to cheer them up and prove that God's in his heaven and everything will be all right." Every issue carries some story or article stressing the Golden Rule. "By promoting the Golden Rule on a large enough scale," Wood sometimes says, "you might solve most of the problems of human relationships, from loneliness to world peace."

The tendency of people to "think the world owes them a living" disturbs Wood, and he pounds away in Faith for self-reliance and initiative. If it were practical, he probably would persuade

all of Fellowship's city dwellers to go live on farms, where they could produce their own necessities of life while enjoying the serenity of the countryside. Since it isn't, he contents himself with planning the farm his own family will live on some day.

Often Wood consults Fellowship's photograph album with its pictures of thin, spare New England women, hospitable Westerners, family groups, and an occasional lonely lighthouse keeper. These people all spend a good part of their lives at prayer. Besides praying together three times a day, they pray separately for guidance in solving their problems.

Life-Study Fellowship is founded on prayer. When Wood and Boren began to survey the average American's attitude toward religion, they were convinced that people wanted to pray, not merely to demonstrate faith but to seek guidance through difficulties. Yet they discovered that the average person has no more equipment for praying than the Lord's Prayer, Now I Lay Me, or prayers found in prayer books. (And these, says Wood, "are too commonly just a lot of clichés thrown together and printed in Old English.") Often a person is too inarticulate to do anything but repeat a simple plea over and over.

Fellowship's prayers are its answer. Before Wood wrote a line, he went through more than 1,000 books. He read prayers. He read theories of prayers. He studied the Bible. He delved into Indian philosophy. Then he told Boren their prayers must be simple, natural, and poetic. He was particularly emphatic about the solacing and uplifting qualities of prayer. Boren, being essentially a rugged individualist, demanded insertion of practical self-help.

FELLOWSHIP'S prayers are poetical-practical prayers. The postal parsons call them "New-Way Prayers," and they are. There are some 300 of them, covering most conceivable human trials. Each is written in a simple, personal, emotional form with words a person naturally would use when talking to God. Each analyzes a problem and points its solution.

The typical prayer is printed on white, yellow, pink, or blue paper. Below the title is a Biblical quotation. The prayer works poetically down to the fourth or fifth paragraph, which carries the practicality:

"Help me make other people happy by sharing with them the good things Thou gavest me." . . . "Let me awake each morning, dear Father, with the feeling that each day is another opportunity to be a good friend to others, to help them, to do things for them, for in these little things I shall be doing my part to establish Thy Kingdom ever more firmly on earth."

In the various prayers Fellowship members persuade themselves to be cheerful, to work hard, to be clean and neat, to live within their incomes and avoid debt, to avoid the evils of drink, to eat and sleep properly, and to think of others as they do of themselves.

On joining Fellowship, they are told to say a prayer once every day for the first two weeks, so that they surely will begin to "live the Christian solution" to their problems.

When Wood and Boren began Fellowship, they advertised "prayers for your problems," and persons who answered the ads (the postal parsons employ the euphemism "messages") were sent blanks to fill in with their most pressing problems. Soon the postal parsons had begun to compile a prodigious total. They arranged them on a check list of 100 New-Way Prayers. Costing 10 cents apiece (12 for $1), prayers are available for everything from renting a room to sleeping soundly. They include prayers for the safety of sons overseas, for more friends, for more influence over people, for more loving husbands (or wives), for security in one's old age, and prayers of everlasting thankfulness to God.

Among the most popular prayers are: That I Shall Always Be Thankful to God for His Blessings on Me; That God Will Bless Me and My Loved Ones Always; That the Later Years of My Life Will Be Blessed with Happiness and Plenty; That Peace May Come Soon to This War-Torn World; That the One I Love Will Come Back to Me; and—That I May Lose Weight and Become More Attractive.

The Fellowship practical lessons (25 cents apiece, 5 for $1) cover such problems as getting a job, having a happier home, and making friends. In the lesson on more harmony at home a wife is told, "Never argue with your husband. If there is a quarrel, give in first." Other advice includes, "Never let the sun go down on a grievance" and "Gather your family in the front room every night and read the Bible to them." The lesson on friends advises: "Really smile at people. Show an interest in what they are doing well, whether it be sowing corn, making a patchwork quilt, or rolling bandages."

Faith magazine, which goes to every one of the 100,000 four times a year, contains the thrice-daily prayers to be said at 8 A. M., 12 noon, and 9 P. M., and gives the member the feeling that he is one of "a band of friends around the earth, united in Faith, in Fellowship, and in Prayer, to help each other and to build a better, happier world for all mankind."

Faith is free, but members are invited to send a contribution now and then if they can. A small magazine, it is printed in purple ink and is illustrated with line drawings. These usually show a happy couple walking down a sunlit

(*Continued on page 69*)

Headquarters for Life-Study Fellowship is an old country house at Noroton, Connecticut. The workers above are sorting a single day's requests from some of the Fellowship's 100,000 members. Below: The answers are going back—most of them prayers (at 10¢ each—12 for $1) to meet specialized needs.

PROFESSOR PYRO

As malicious rumor strikes a blow at the bank, Eb convinces J. G. that all trickery is not treachery. But his spectacular feat only serves to increase Missy's antagonism

BY EDWIN LANHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK ANDERSON

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

PROFESSOR PYRO—real name, Eb Peters—became known to Othello, Oklahoma, when he persuaded J. G. Watson, the banker, to lend him three hundred dollars on a full house in a poker game. That night, after faking a fireworks display of "Mount Etna in Eruption," Eb escaped the fury of the paying customers only with the help of Mistletoe Watson, the banker's daughter, who took him out to their farm.

The next morning Eb, who had been a tool dresser in the great oil fields of the state, discovered a promising oil structure. When he told Missy he was going back to Othello to return their money to the ticket-stub holders of the previous night's fiasco, she thought it was due to the promptings of his conscience. But his purpose was to ask her father to stake him to enough money to drill an oil well. J. G. refused, so Eb went to Tulsa and Sapulpa to try to raise the money. All he could get was a thousand dollars from Rosie Hogan, proprietor of a gambling house.

In the meantime, Albert Neville, bank cashier and admirer of Missy, warned her and her father against such a shady character as Eb Peters.

When Eb returned to Othello, the town was buzzing with the news of oil in the vicinity. He went first to "Pops" Anapopolis, proprietor of the Athens Café, to make a deal for his meals. Pops' generous-hearted daughter, Stasie, told Eb they would do as he asked.

When J. G. saw the derrick raised over Eb's lease, he offered to go in to the extent of five thousand dollars.

The well was down to twelve hundred feet and showed no oil, and all the money was spent, and J. G. refused to speculate any more.

PART FOUR

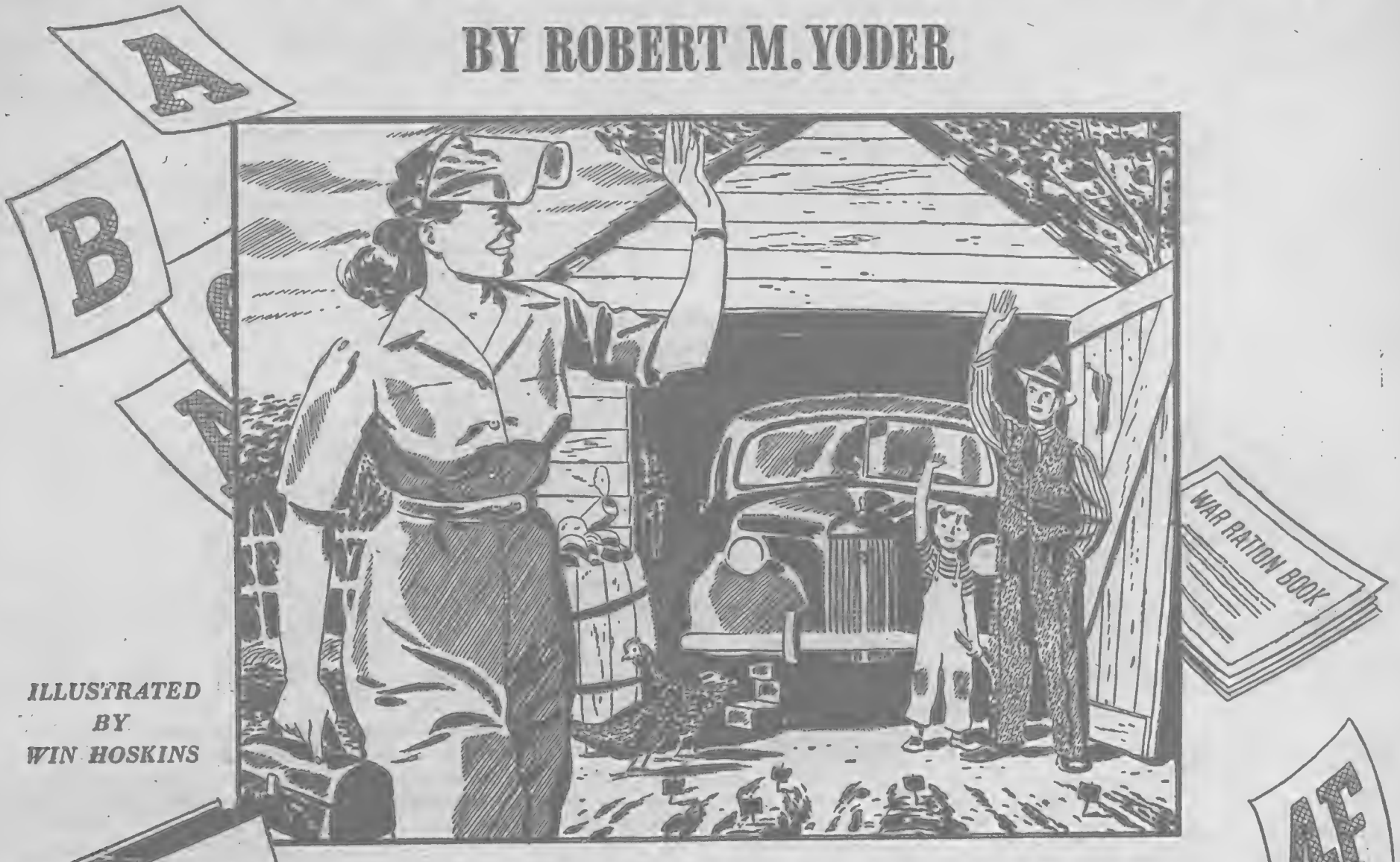
"EB, we're going to pull that casing and sell it for what we can get," declared J. G. Watson. "I'm not going to pour any more money down that hole. I've learned my lesson and

(*Continued on page 48*)

Eb stepped forward. "It's your loose talk," he said, and slapped Albert.

There's No Front Like Home

BY ROBERT M. YODER



ILLUSTRATED BY WIN HOSKINS

A Liberty BOOK CONDENSATION
READING TIME ONE EVENING

A merry account of a side of the war that has not been heroic but has a confusing charm all its own.

Here is the laugh-provoking predicament of all the cash customers who are Rationed or Frozen, Over Age, Nonessential, or Nondeferrable; whose Victory Gardens didn't grow much, and who don't rate anything more than an A card.

Drop That Raise!

FOR many, the hollowest laugh of the civilian side of this war came the day it was announced that we were Frozen. From that moment hence, it became illegal for any one to lure us from our job by the offer of a better one, nor could our loving employers give us a raise. To pay more money was no longer merely contrary to the boss's every instinct; it was now contrary to federal law.

This, if it had any connection with reality, would be wonderful. Here you go along for years, feeling nonessential, irrelevant, and immaterial, feeling that not even the Missing Persons Bureau would care if you disappeared from the Missing Persons Bureau. And then it turns out that you are so valuable they pass a special law warning off any bounder who would lure you from your regular place of employment. It puts thousands of us under special protection formerly accorded only to crown jewels, Presidents, and sixteen-year-old daughters. The cad who tries to pay *us* more money is lucky if he doesn't end up in jail.

As I get it, this is a mighty serious thing. This is not a tort, like smashing a fender. It is not something that can be excused, like stealing a cow. The employer who makes a pass at us might just as well be dealing in hot cars or smuggled gems. We are dynamite. To offer us another job is like making love to the U. S. marshal's daughter.

We have been stepchildren in the past, and there have been times when we thought our employers didn't care whether we lived or died, as long as we died off the premises. Far from shielding us from the advances of rivals, it seemed likely the boss was only waiting for the next employers' meeting for an agreement to close the whole department. In our new status, we are theoretically in such demand that it may be necessary to call out the troops. Lovesick employers have been warned off the property. I guess they could send flowers or candy, or a bottle of some delicate scent, preferably from Ken-

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tucky, but that's all they can hope for. I thought of putting a sign on my desk, saying, "You May Look, But Do Not Touch." Or perhaps the single dismissive word: "Taken." Taken every payday, I would have said before.

This spell of sweet reasonableness, this economic Leap Year, may not last. The bosses may not love us in December as they do in May. Even so, it is quite a sight while it lasts. The Help Wanted ads display a solicitude for the helps' happiness that is beautiful to see. Do you remember when our employers were sometimes a little peremptory, with a tendency to kick you downstairs? A trifle brusque, a touch autocratic? With an occasional downright heel? They have vanished. The men in charge of hiring now include some of the sweetest natures since Mother Machree.

Here is an ad that promises "friendly atmosphere." And if you think that is good, have a look at the next one. In this little Eden there is, of necessity, some supervision. But the supervision is at all times "kind, understanding, and patient." I'm as hypersensitive as the next one, but

I couldn't ask better treatment than that. As a matter of fact, Damon couldn't ask better treatment than that from Pythias.

And look at this line: "Advancement assured." It seems only yesterday that advancement was by no means assured, but was frowned upon as contrary to policy. The man who walked in and asked for a better job was looked upon as a whiner. Advancement was anything but assured; it was somewhere between implausible and grounds for instantaneous dismissal.

Here is an ad calling for a porter. He is assured that working conditions will not merely be good, which is mediocre these days, but will be "ideal." This side of Paradise, you can't ask nicer working conditions than that. The man who undertakes this responsibility is going to have "day work only," and he is promised "liberal rest periods" when Utopia begins to pall. 'Way back there, a year or so ago, there were business organizations in which an employee was allowed to feel somewhere between a permitted trespasser, a squatter, and a poor relation. Now he is a treasure and a prize, and we stress the easy going nature of the men you will have to work for. Our foreman is a butter-hearted old softy, and our superintendent goes around with a pocketful of sugar cookies.

Comes the revolution, it'll be too late.

We Must Cut Down

If you drop in on one of the classier New York millionaires and the butler looks a little strange, for heaven's sake don't make any cracks about it, for that is also the valet. Using the valet for double duty that way is one of the ways in which this millionaire is economizing. I read about this in the New York World-Telegram, in a series called What Has Become of the Rich?

The story by no means says that this rich lad is hard up. In fact, there is some mention of his once having a hundred million dollars, and nothing to suggest that he doesn't still have some or all of this to fall back on if things get really tough. On the other hand, this was in 1942, when the future of millionaires was frankly uncertain, and both he and the missus had prudently determined to cut down. As she prudently put it to the World-Telegram's reporter, they have trimmed their sails.

I pass this information along so that you can act accordingly. You will have to watch your step every inch of the way if you don't want to say something embarrassing, for doing without a butler is only one of several changes this family has made.

One thing you ought to know is that the lady has put her jewels in storage, so as to save insurance. Another is that the family is living on only two floors of its Park Avenue house, everything else having been closed off. Be on guard against making any remarks about the size of the flat, or saying that the hostess looks a little bleak without her diamonds. Ladies and gents of real breeding, I mean, will button up their lip and do nothing to call attention to these reduced circumstances.

Or if it is too apparent to be overlooked, then I would make some lighthearted reference to it and try to pass the whole thing off as a joke. "How clever not to wear your emeralds," you might say. "How did you ever get rid of them?" Or, if the flat seems more than a little cramped, you could make some comment about the place being cozy and easy to take care of. "I have often thought of closing everything but two or three floors of my own place," you might say. "Those damn stairs are killing my feet."

ANOTHER economy the lad's helpmeet is making, the story says, is to wear dark clothes, which don't soil so easily; and to wear small hats, for, she says, a girl practically has to use a limousine to wear a big hat successfully. She is using taxis instead, and wherever she goes, arranges to walk one way. As I get it, she is doing all her own walking.

Still another money-saver comes in converting the formal dining room into a small informal dining room, also used as a living room. Personally, I feel this is a little like eating in the kitchen, but I certainly will never mention it, and hope you will do the same.

Naturally, as you file into this overcrowded little nook for dinner, you can't very well pretend no changes have been made. Perhaps the kindest thing to do is to show you can unbend and enter into the spirit of the thing. "Harry, old boy," you might say, "do you mind if I blow my soup?" Just how you dress to dine in such Spartan surroundings as a converted formal dining room, I am not sure. To avoid embarrassment and put these folks at their ease, I intend to wear a white tie, but go barefoot.

What about the combined valet and butler? Well, that *is* a little frugal, and there will be those who feel these good folk are pinching the pennies. But what of it? These are changing times, and instead of jeering at this rugged simplicity, a lot of us might better emulate it. This couple will lose some of their fair-weather friends, no doubt. But they can always count on me.

After hearing of belt-tightening like that, it was not surprising to read, as the season of 1942-43 drew on, that the Bath and Tennis Club of Palm Beach had converted to war. This was in a story telling how war's grim hand had changed Palm Beach almost beyond recognition. The club, it said, was keeping chickens.

Society-page dispatches from such playgrounds, if you can properly call an egg factory like the Bath and Tennis Club a playground, always seem a little torn between saying that life is very pleasant there and that war has taken all the fun out of having a good time, which, for all I know, might be right. Certainly I would expect reduced rates, for the same communiqué spoken of earlier noted a somewhat striking wartime shortage in Palm Beach, that of royalty. Just where royalty went to, it didn't say, but it did say that titled folk had all but disappeared, "leaving only a few noble personages clinging to the guest houses of the big estates." Then came a line that should forever dispel any idea that royalty can't adjust to new conditions. "Several," it said, meaning several royal personages, "have dropped their titles."

Only for the duration, it may be, only pending a decision on the second war for democracy; but I call that roughing it. Even so, I am not going to waste any money in a playground so hard hit by war that royalty slops around with its titles off.

Taxes Will Beat the Axis; or, I'm a Little Beat Myself

EVERY time Mr. Morgenthau makes a statement in Washington about his taxes, there is a note of melancholy and self-pity I find very touching. Measures he has taken are, he seems to feel, miserable and inadequate; hardly more than stopgaps; only a beginning. Mr. Morgenthau gives the impression he thinks his taxes are poor things at best, nowhere near recapturing the amount of money they should, and I thought it might give him surcease to hear from a perfect victim, a citizen on whom every measure he takes works like a charm. I refer, Mr. Morgenthau, sir, as usual, to me.

Mr. Morgenthau hasn't invented a tax yet that didn't score a bull's-eye on me. Every time he adds a surtax or reduces a deduction, that's me all over, Henry; and every time he ups the tax for a man with two children, it fits me like a glove. You'd think it was meant for me, Hank, and I'm getting a little fed up with it, too, but don't intend to mention it until after the war.

The same with every levy of every sort. I don't even have to read the tax stories. Every time one of them appears, I know it is going to raise the taxes on precisely what I buy or use, and that would be true if I were plotting to buy a giraffe. In fact, Mr. Morgenthau, you could tax me more, and undoubtedly will, but you couldn't tax me more accurately if you read my mail. I wish you did, too, as it would give you an inkling of how the other half lives.

I can say the same thing about the anti-inflationary measures. The gentlemen in charge of this fight seem haunted by the fear that nothing they have yet done will prevent the citizens from going on spending sprees and squandering money in wild competitive bidding for articles that are rare and growing rarer.

Well, gents, your efforts to hold down wages and prevent inflationary spending, ineffectual as they seem to you in moments of depression, have worked just peachy in my case. It's been months since I have gone out throwing money around. In fact, if I didn't know this was a dangerous boom, I'd think times were getting harder and harder.

The only criticism of Mr. Morgenthau's taxes is that they are sometimes a little advanced. Take that mathematical treat, the Victory Tax. The old-fashioned income tax was never difficult to figure out, in spite of all the corny jokes about it, but only difficult to meet. But the Victory Tax, as first submitted to a befuddled public, combined war bond purchases, insurance premiums, and the reduction of outstanding indebtedness into one of the nicest bits of homework you have seen since you had trouble with geometry.

A part of this, or possibly all, was absorbed when the pay-go taxes came along, and I am in hope nothing more will be said about it, for this little teaser included an invisible though variable postdated refund provision that I will never be able to figure out, unless the butler did it. A portion of the tax was to accumulate in Washington and be returned to you after the war, unless you elected to make use of this unseen hoard before then.

In one explanatory newspaper story the case was cited of a man who paid fifty dollars in life-insurance premiums, and when computing his regular income tax, held back that fifty dollars, which sounds very nice indeed, as it gives him another deduction. The trouble is, however, that he was setting this fifty dollars off against his postwar Victory Tax refund. Why he would want to subtract fifty dollars he had paid out, with great mental anguish, from one hundred dollars he had coming after the war, makes a mighty zesty little problem. Taxes like that can make those long winter evenings fairly fly.

This same open-handed taxpayer paid $400 in bills. Just where he got credit like that, the story didn't say, but he did, anyway, and now he paid. Well, that enabled him to wipe out the entire refund he had expected to get from the Victory Tax, and seemed to be regarded as a mighty shrewd stroke of business. It looks to me as if he is out four hundred dollars plus a refund, but apparently that is all to the good. The only fellow whose role I could dope out was that of the gent who got the four hundred dollars. I clung to that.

Now that is an ingenious tax, all right, and should do everything for a nation but cure absenteeism and the mounting divorce rate. At one fell swoop it collects money, prevents inflation, encourages the purchase of war bonds, pats the back of men who pay their bills (or at least, who owe bills) and rewards those responsible souls who keep their insurance paid up. A tax like that should do wonders for a nation's moral fiber and could only do more if there were a refund for those who don't smoke until they are twenty-one and who love their mothers.

Next came the pay-go taxes with the forgiveness principle. Forgiveness seemed a little mysterious at first, but cleared fast enough. Apparently they had forgiven us right in the teeth. They had forgiven us full in the pants. The forgiveness was more in spirit than in fact; it was invisible and painless; it was a kiss in the dark. It meant that on or about July 1, 1942, while you might be in something of a jam with the creditors, you were aces all around with the Treasury Department. Except, of course, for 25 per cent. You were all paid up for 1942 except for the 25 per cent that was not forgiven. Personally, I found it a little hard to know just how to feel on July 1. While not exactly as happy as a lark, a taxpayer should have been 75 per cent as happy as a lark, or, to put it more precisely, as happy as a lark that owes money.

One clear-cut result was to make September 15 a date that takes its place right alongside March 15 as a day of mental turmoil and nervous indigestion. That day the taxpayer files an estimated return (and aren't they all?) to see how pay-go taxes were working out. If he ends up owing the government money, he pays half on September 15 and half on December 15, and a happy Christmas to *you*, too, I'm sure.

FORTUNATELY, no taxpayer need puzzle these intricate problems out by himself. There are books you can buy on the subject, costing from twenty-five cents to a dollar and adding a good fifty dollars to your final return.

The last one of these handy manuals this book-lover bought told exactly how to compute your tax for the year 1942. While it provided only three or four two-bit ideas for new deductions, it was a remarkably complete little treatise, including everything but a confession of judgment and a plea of guilty. And it was worth the money if only to see how the other half lives.

There was a fascinating table, for instance, telling exactly what to do with government bonds of every variety, from RFC 1 per cent notes, Series S, to 4 per cent Alaska Railroad retirement bonds. Possibly a hundred types of this delightful paper were listed, according to what was taxable and what was not, and there was some equally good stuff about the interest from securities containing a tax-free covenant. Advice like this means getting the Governments all down and sorting them out, but darned if I don't think it's worth it.

There is usually another excellent section covering "the two-year carryback of net operating losses," which will seem an eminently fair and even tolerant provision, but, like so many eminently fair provisions, does not apply to me. There is also a lot of good advice for the man who married a wealthy wife. He needs good advice about as much as Lily Pons needs singing lessons, but it's here for him, anyway.

There is usually a good list of 173 forms of intake which need not be counted as income at all, and 188 deductions that may be taken by married couples. A remarkable number of these don't apply to me, but they must be invaluable to some one. Thus, it is nice to learn that a man can deduct any amounts subtracted from his pay for damaging his employer's property. If you have engaged in any considerable amount of office vandalism during the year, this is worth knowing. There is also some good news for ambassadors of foreign nations, whose pay, it appears, is not taxable at all. There are equally handy hints, I feel sure, for llama fanciers and Egyptologists.

Perhaps the list that is of most widespread value, however, is the catalogue of things no one may deduct under any circumstances. There is something here for every one.

It was heartening to learn that soldiers don't have to consider their meals as compensation, nor the use of the rifle. No such softhearted lenience is shown toward the civilian, however, for if I read my book right, everything but the last cigarette you borrowed must be counted as part of your income, and I am not sure about the cigarette.

And it was discouraging to read that gifts made by a man's loving employer are usually taxable, as this may get employers out of the habit. Nor was it cheering to hear that you can be taxed on any bonus given at the time of dismissal, and on unemployment benefits received while beating the streets looking for a new Legree. Even if you are fired and on the dole, your old Uncle Treasury doesn't forget you, kid. A pound of flesh, however bruised, is the motto in these quarters.

It may be that Mr. Morgenthau would like to hear an average citizen's reaction to his pay-go tax deductions, and if so, will state, Henry, that from the looks of my pay check you can stop worrying about inflation. My check, with the pay-go tax deduction added to the other deductions, is just a sort of negotiable reminder from the payroll department, telling of what used to be. In one column it tells me what I am making, and in another section it tells me what I am going to get, and, Henry, you wouldn't think it was the same fellow. Neither of them is doing very well, either, but one of them is practically a tramp.

It isn't the fault of the new pay-go deduction, Henry. Deductions have been getting so they make up by far the greatest part of the pay check's reading matter, and the part that is payable, or real, or whatever you like to call it, is hardly more than a footnote. I don't know how it is with the other fellows, Hank, but the pay check where I work is in two parts, the regular check, which simply says, "Pay this wight a few coppers so's he won't starve," and another section devoted exclusively to deductions. These are running a little race, and the outcome never was in doubt. Any day now, I will open my check and get a two-page financial statement plus six cents in stamps. As a matter of fact, I am not sure about the stamps. I seem to be working up to a place where payday will consist of an auditor's report and a pat on the back.

To tell the truth, Henry, I have been a little nervous about this for a long time, figuring that one of these days the office would conclude that it costs too much to do the bookkeeping and that a small fortune could be saved by not issuing me a check at all, probably paying me in subscriptions to the paper. It must take the whole time of a pretty smart girl to figure out if I have anything left over at the end of the week, and it must be depressing work, too.

Out of Gas

THIS is going to sound a little testy, but I wish the thousands of motorists who are curtailing their driving would quit curtailing it up and down the street I live on.

They closed one of the main traveled thoroughfares only a few blocks away while I was sitting around wondering whether it would be all right to use the eraser on the end of my pencil, and this brought the traffic over to my street. I say "my" street only in the roughest sense of the word "my," for the fact is I only rent, and just looked out the window to see three drivers jockeying for the right to park across my driveway. At any rate, whosever street it is, this quiet little lane has been running with automobiles like a gutter after a cloudburst.

All day Sunday the cars went by as if my little nest were a reviewing stand. It was a pageant of transportation, it was motorized America on parade. At times the cars were lined up for a solid block, held motionless by the fact that east-west traffic, up at the corner, was just as thick as the north-south flow. Here were rival columns of patriots blocking each other at the intersection.

Apparently they were just out for a little Sunday curtailment in the country, as they did not seem to be going any place; just curtailing around, wearing out the tires. The parade started early and lasted late. Cars were still curtailing by at one and two o'clock in the morning. Curtailing fairly remarkably fast, too, considering the thirty-five-mile-an-hour limit. So fast, in some cases, you would have supposed gold had been discovered in Wisconsin, or possibly butter. There is apparently nothing that will keep these motorists off of wheels, but I wish they wouldn't go so fast. Look, fellows. Children play on this street, and heaven knows that's enough.

It is an odd experience, considering all you read about the rubber situation, to look out into a stream of traffic like that. It is even odder to see your driveway blocked. I want to advise those fellows to be careful. There is a mail-truck driver who regards that space as his alone. He is pretty stingy about it, too, and brooks no trespassing from other trespassers, or from the rightful tenant, either.

I got to thinking, sitting there with the rich smell of burning tires wreathing about my head, how different it would be under a totalitarian government. What relief would I have then against that mail truck? What chance would I have of getting the driver to park on the other side of the street, where there is a space for that purpose? To call up his superior would probably get nothing but a short surly answer about the rights of governmental employees being far paramount to any rights of mine. "Nothing can be done," the Gruppenführer would tell me. Whereas under our system, if I were to call up the postmaster, the whole thing could be cleared up in a flash—What's wrong with that sentence?

THE OPA checks up on motorists every now and then, to see if they are misusing their gasoline ration, but it never seems to do much good. For one thing, every motorist halted is a picture of outraged innocence.

What is he doing, 600 miles from home, on an A card? Why, he has driven there to visit his aged mother, who is ninety-seven years old today, and still hanging around summer resorts.

Where did he get the gasoline? Why, he saved it, drop by drop, in an old blue cup right next to his piggy bank. This is the first time since the inauguration of gas rationing that he has as much as had his car out of the garage, and to be halted now is more than mortal man should be asked to put up with.

Pleasure trip? Why, he hates every weary mile of it, and the fact that he has a string of fish in the back is the purest coincidence.

Every one who gets tagged, in a check-up like that, is a defense worker, too.

He has been working sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, and this is the first time any one has been able to tear him from his duty. One more week and he would have collapsed right at his lathe, dealing production a blow that would set it reeling. Friends pleaded with him to get out and get a little rest. "You owe it to your country," they said. "Why don't you knock off on the Fourth of July and get yourself a civilian furlough?" So he just got in the car and started out, and here he is in the scenic State of Wisconsin, or Minnesota, forcing himself to relax. For any one to question his use of gasoline is like stopping Donald Nelson. It is not only a bum rap—it is downright ingratitude.

Did I say, a minute ago, that our poor harassed motorist is visiting his aged mother? It is an aunt, and she is ill. In fact, she is at death's door, and the dear old lady is failing fast. Her last wish in life is to see her only nephew, and he has answered the call without thought of expense or inconvenience. It is mighty nice of him to come, too, for it has meant dropping everything, especially work. He had to lay off Friday to get ready, and it will mean giving up work on Saturday, too. But here he is, like the fine dutiful nephew he is. To halt and question a man of his stripe on what is not only an errand of mercy but a very sad mission is like tripping a doctor.

Shall his old aunt be condemned to loneliness just because she lives in the middle of a resort country? Is it her fault if her native town is noted for good fishing? Would any one criticize a feeble old lady for falling ill in the middle of the vacation season?

As must be true with other A-card holders, the volume of traffic puzzled me for a while, and I used to ask about it. "How can you make a trip like that," would be the innocent query, "when all you've got is an A card?" That leads to nothing but another blow to the ego, such as received upon learning that the War Manpower Commission regards your lifework in a class with tattooing, umbrella mending, and vagrancy. You discover there aren't many of us A-card nobodies around.

Good old Thurlow, it turns out, is an unsuspected farmer. Yes, got a little place out by Corn Borer, Oklahoma, six states away. And naturally, good old Thurlow has to drive out there and see what the tenant is up to, or the tenant would be helpless and food production would take a sickening sag that might mean a complete revision of the war plans. Incidentally, Thurlow's tenant has a tractor and a truck, and a tank full of fine gasoline, so taking one thing with another, gas rationing to Thurlow is just a song.

In Henry's case, now, it develops that Henry is in an essential industry. "Aren't you tending bar any more?" you ask him. "Yes," says Henry, "but out where I live they regard that as an essential occupation. For a while I had unlimited gasoline, but they have tightened up, and all I am allowed now is five thousand miles a month."

With Pete it's different. Pete drives about fifty miles a day to get to his office, and you wouldn't suppose he could do it, but it is explained that he is in the war effort. "I thought he manufactured fingernail files," you remark. "He does," it is explained, "but he sells them to war workers."

I brightened when it was announced the Office of Defense Transportation intended to launch a mighty anti-travel campaign and back it by a lot of advertising. As it turned out, however, most of the persuasion has been aimed at urging civilians not to ride the railroads unless on the most urgent business. As every one knows, this has produced the greatest railroad travel in years.

NOT being supposed to have any gasoline has made it a little tough for taking week-end outings, or Civilian Furloughs, but thousands do it, under conditions that should reassure any one who fears the pioneer spirit is dead. Drivers on pleasure trips of this strange sort skulk along as if running booze, trying to look as if the car burned charcoal, and on their faces is an expression as stern as that of General Washington in the prow of that rowboat. Gas is only one of their problems; they are also wondering how to take this outing without seeming to have fun. It will develop that this latter fear is groundless; they are going to have a terrible time.

Here is a guilty little party sneaking out to spend a week-end in a spot they never saw before in their lives, old Lake Algae, said to be very nice. It is an expedition that calls for courage and endurance. There is no chance Indians will get them, of course, but there is a chance the OPA will, on charge of pleasure driving. Outside of the gasoline consumption, to call this pleasure would be a very bum rap indeed.

They have reservations, they think, but outside of reservations they have nothing but hope, courage, and exactly enough gas to get there and back if everything goes off perfectly. Furthermore, there is every chance that the man who made the reservations has quit, in the meantime, for a better job.

They will swim in stagnant water they never saw before, faring out on a lake of unknown depth, never knowing where the shallows are and too proud to ask.

The water they swim in, while a little cloudy, is as White Rock to the water they drink. This has a strange and forbidding taste, so that they wonder uneasily what they are going to catch from it.

But does this deter them from drinking it? Not at all. After all, the water can't be any worse than the ice. The ice comes in odd-shaped chunks, and is plainly not the product of any refrigerator. It is natural ice. It tastes as if it had been made in an old granite quarry, long, long, ago. But our dauntless pleasure seekers down the water, cooling it with the pearl-gray ice, and perhaps it makes no difference, for they are stirring it with an old spoon no one dares to think much about, either. And by this time they are mixing it with whisky for which they have searched longer and harder than Stanley searched for Livingstone.

These heroes of mine scorn anything that is not a mixture of slum, fire hazard, and makeshift plumbing. The original pioneers were brave enough in their way, no doubt, but *they* chose uninhabited country.

How's Your Morale?

THE worst thing about the small hardships civilians are asked to endure in this war is nicely illustrated, I think, by a little bird song I read just about the time it appeared there would be no tires and, shortly thereafter, no car. If you considered that prospect as a contribution you would have to make to the war a nuisance, but a constructive one, you will share my resentment at being told that when forced to walk I would have the time of my life. War, it appeared, could be more darned fun than anything.

"Soon we will run out of tires and cannot use our automobiles," said the writer in question. "A look of stoicism

comes on the faces of most people. But as for me, all I say is, 'Goody, hurrah.' "

So as to have no question about gender, it was a lady writer who was saying goody, hurrah, but there are men of the same gladsome cast of mind. This lass is simply a little gladder than the others.

"I will have to walk twelve to twenty miles a day," she exults, "and what will that mean? I will have a lovely rose-suffused complexion, a clear slippery eye, a steady broad-smiling nervous system, an easy stride, and an earth-spurning tread. And my soul will become *so* much nicer."

Any one who fears that war is futile should be reassured by that. This war is good for the complexion, not to mention this chick's nervous system and her slippery eye.

The story is no gladder than many others, and the trouble with them is, they all sound hollower than a gourd. The first signs of gas rationing produced another set of stories on the joys of walking, and when it became clear that taxes were going to be something murderous, these silver-lining addicts promptly wrote a lot of enthusiastic talk about the delights of poverty. In view of the fact that walking is only slightly less popular in this country than fasting, rock crushing, or tire changing, you'd think that popularizing it was a hopeless cause. The same with poverty, which, like walking, may be honorable and even patriotic, but is pretty generally conceded, by those in the know, to be a damn nuisance.

Sure, every one would be hard up, said these voluntary virtue finders, or whatever you call that cast of mind, but that would be a romp. It would take us back to the simple life of our forebears. We would learn to like simple economical foods, we would sip hard cider instead of Scotch, we would play parlor games, and might even wear patches. They seemed to look on it as a gay prank, a kind

of universal Hard Times party. That is a pleasant attitude to take, but if these blithe spirits will consult a few insiders who have had firsthand experience with financial stringency, they can get that happy smile pushed right down their golden throats. It is fine to keep a stiff upper lip, it is nice to look on the brighter side of things. But until the happiness kids find a brighter side that is actually brighter, I wish they would leave us to our own gloomy devices. It isn't the civilian sacrifices that are ruining my morale; it's this sunny gladness about them. Leave our little sacrifices alone, will you, Cuddles? We like them the way they are.

If people of that jolly ilk must be glad about something, why don't they be glad for the vegetables? There is the success story of the war—the rise of the most ordinary garden truck to prices so high it is almost impossible to recognize these items as the dietary bums they used to be.

They say, for example, that leaf lettuce is selling at this writing for around forty-five cents. This is said to mean forty-five cents a pound, not forty-five cents a bale or ton. Just what the price was this time a year ago, this reporter doesn't know, but it seems certain that forty-five cents would have purchased a wagon load. As a matter of fact, a man with forty-five cents could get four hamburgers and a cup of coffee in those quaint days and wouldn't have had to eat lettuce at all.

It is hard to believe this can be the same old lettuce we knew of yore, when they used to tan it and stick it in sandwiches. You would suppose they had developed a new type, possibly with a little more flavor; but no. It is plain old leaf lettuce as ever was. The only difference is that it now commands the price of meat.

THE same magic wand has touched our little friend the tomato, too. They were saying the other day that a single tomato, weighed by the grocer as carefully as if he were selling gold dust, assayed at twenty-three cents. This was not the grand champion of the county fair, mind you. This was not a new Mrs. Miniver tomato some Burbank had crossed with Thousand Island dressing. This was just a tomato, nothing more, nothing less. If you have tomato plants in your Victory garden, and they show any signs of propagating, you will do well to take them in at night, for at these prices we are in for a bad wave of tomato rustling.

They say wax beans bring as much as thirty-five cents a quart, and that crazed broccoli fiends are paying up to thirty-nine and forty cents a bunch. Oddly enough, this does not mean cooked broccoli, either, but raw. Forty cents a bunch is about what I would pay for broccoli that was cooked by a first-class chef and then eaten for me. As for asparagus, they say these exotic blooms were up as high as sixty-nine cents a bunch, which is only slightly less than long-stemmed American Beauty roses, but have slipped from this dizzy pinnacle and can now be purchased at some cut-rate asparagus dens for three or four cents a stalk. How is it served these days—in old Sèvres vases?

I wish, incidentally, that the incurable optimists who make up the figures on the cost of living would add tuna fish to their list. These figures appear every month or so, and would be highly reassuring if only things didn't cost so damn much, as they invariably carry the cheery message that the cost of living has risen a mere 2 or 5 or 7 per cent, which is as moderate as it is preposterous. Just what items are included I don't know; ostrich plumes, high button shoes, and sledge dogs are some of the staples on the list, it seems certain. At any rate, I wish they would add tuna fish, for I believe I now possess thirteen ounces of the grand champion.

I found this canned hero in a delicatessen store, and the way I know he is the champ is only too easy—the price. He was selling at the flossy figure of ninety-eight cents the small can. It is marked "extra fancy," and must be fancy indeed; this must be the fanciest tuna ever hauled dripping from the Pacific. Before the war ninety-eight cents would have bought at least twice that much tuna fish plus a ride on the boat that caught it.

Here is a dish that was not merely ordinary before the war, but a little on the plebeian side. Good, plain, wholesome food, as the phrase goes, meaning "not much." But here it was, selling for the price of lobster.

A careful inspection, without opening, indicates that this is a No. 1 can, and I thought for one wild moment they had started numbering them, like etchings or limited editions. That is wrong, of course; the figure simply indicates the size or capacity.

As for the can itself, the material seems to be an ordinary good grade of tin-can tin. You might suppose, at these prices, that the stuff was put up in white gold, or at the very least stainless steel, but if so, the can doesn't mention it. Neither is there anything special about the label. The label is nice—a fish picture—but does not look to be hand-painted, and if it is the work of some famous fish artist, he neglected to sign his name. Neither does there seem to be anything revolutionary about the canning process.

The label says this fish is packed in cottonseed oil, but another can of tuna fish, bought before we started to ward off inflation, says the same thing. The only other clue on the label comes in the words "salt added." You could add a lot of salt for ninety-eight cents, so that hardly explains the superlative price, unless it means "salt added, grain by grain."

Nothing accounts for it in fact; it must be the contents.

I could clear up this mystery in a minute by opening the can, but who can afford to eat tuna at ninety-eight cents the thirteen ounces? I'll eat this can by candlelight, opening it like the last bottle of amontillado.

My dictionary says the tuna fish is "any one of several

mackerel-like, coarse-fleshed, oily fishes, found in all warm seas and sometimes weighing one thousand pounds." At one dollar and twenty cents a pound, which is what the champ cost me, a thousand-pound tuna would be Big Business.

Seed 'Em and Weep

ONE of the most remarkable aspects of Victory Gardening, outside of finding yourself doing it, is the dynamic quality of the seeds you can buy, and just by chance, too.

You might not care for my lettuce, but I cannot blame the seed. All I asked for was a package of lettuce seed, but the description on the package made it immediately clear that I had stumbled into lettuce fit for a king. This, it said, is a "large, tender, crisp, loose head, of bright green leaves tinged with brownish red." Now, mind you, I didn't ask for the most picturesque lettuce, or even for good lettuce. All I said was "lettuce." Yet what I got was a type which, if it had come up to specifications, a man would be happy to have in his living room. Rembrandt would have been glad to paint it, let alone eat it.

"They remain sweet long," the package continued, "and are slow to go to seed." I wouldn't ask more than that for an epitaph.

It seems the same blind luck had me by the hot little hand when I walked into another store and mumbled a

request for radish seeds. Had the man asked, "What kind of radish seeds?" I would have had to turn and run out, for, while knowing that there are red radishes and white radishes, I hadn't made a decision even on the color. Here again I took what was handed me, and what was handed over turned out to be not merely all right, not merely a pretty fair brand of radish, not merely so-so, but the very peer of the radish clan.

"Peer," in fact, is the word they used. "The peer of all round white-tips," the package said. "Crisp and sweet and remaining fit for use longer than other globe-shaped radishes. Very attractive, and highly recommended for—" A couple of words got torn off at that corner before I grew interested in the reading material on seed packages. But it makes no difference. Obviously, the attractive peer of all round white-tips can be highly recommended for anything whatsoever, including serving to visiting royalty.

Thus, simply by chance, this Victory Gardener had found seed that would grow superlative radishes and lettuce as fair as a daffodil. They were no whit more impressive than the beans. Some day, with machete and micrometer, I intend to fight my way through my little thicket and put those beans to the test. I say "micrometer" because the package spoke of these beans as having been designed with remarkable precision. These seeds, it said, grow pods five and one half inches long and five sixteenths of an inch thick. When I contrasted that scientific accuracy with the sloppy way I bought and planted them, I felt like an unappreciative ignoramus.

Furthermore, if these Brahmins lived up to their promise, to their breeding, to their background, then they were going to be exceedingly tasty, especially for beans. The package said they were "fleshy, stringless, fine-grained, and tender." You couldn't ask more than that of an artichoke, let alone a mess of beans. In fact, you couldn't ask more than that of a love affair.

ANOTHER thing that makes the ham gardener feel embarrassed is the well-nigh incredible pains the company takes in selecting beans like this. This firm "conducts over 52,000 germination tests annually," the package said, "to insure your getting seeds that will *grow*. Over 9,000 purity trials and countless single plant selections are made every year to insure your getting seed of uniformly superb quality. Some of this painstaking work produced the seed in this carton. It was bred to produce brittle, luscious snap beans—and plenty of them."

I can only wish the garden itself got the same painstaking work, instead of the abuse and neglect that is its lot. Maybe it's true I wouldn't know a germination test if I saw one, but I take off my hat to seed that passes over 9,000 purity trials. Could you?

Even with a start like that, a vegetable's life is remarkably precarious. I chanced on a garden book that will have your flesh crawling with its recital of what a chamber of horrors a smiling little vegetable patch can be.

The onion, now, certainly seems sturdy enough, and if there is one garden item that would seem to merit the term "vegetating," you might suppose this is it. Well, it turns out that the onion is chased by things that make the Hound of the Baskervilles seem playful. The onion's life is a hell on earth. The first gruesome fate mentioned by this garden book is Smut, described as "a serious onion disease living in the soil where smutted onions have been grown." The word "serious" is no loose talk, judging from the description that follows. Smut is said to "cause little blisters of black powdery spores on the young plant's leaves, killing them and reducing the yield." I don't think it is going a bit too far to say that killing the onions would truly reduce their yield. And even if it doesn't kill, an attack like this ought to give an onion a damn good scare.

Another little horror lurking just around the corner is Onion Mildew, for which you are advised to spray with a powerful anti-mildew mixture not once but "as often as necessary."

What has had me eating sulfa tablets like salted peanuts, however, is neither of these, but a pest called the Onion Thrip. "Onion thrips," the book says, "are very small, whitish or yellowish-brown colored insects. They are very disastrous when numerous, attacking and feeding on the lower part of the leaves, causing an appearance giving rise to the common names of 'silver top,' 'white blast,' or 'white blight.'" This seems to be kind of a joshing name for having the underside of your leaves eaten away.

That is a pretty unsettling picture, and it is reassuring to learn that there are sections of the garden where life is quieter. Parsley, the book says, "is not likely to be troubled by diseases and insects," at least not troubled in the sense of being mildewed, turned white, wilting, and having its leaves eaten away. In the case of peas, however, we get right back into the fiendishness department. Peas, it turns out, are beset not only by the pea weevil but also by the pea aphis, which is described as a "large pea-green plant louse," a little pet I ardently trust never acquires an interest in human beings.

SHALL I tell you about the potato, eh? Come closer, child. Well, the potato gets a little thing called blackleg, and another called dry rot. Should it escape those, it is still at the mercy of leaf mosiac, fusarium wilt, and curly leaf. And waiting right around the corner is the Blister Beetle, behind which painful-sounding monster is a combination offer called the Flea Beetle. Thus it would be possible for a potato in the grip of fusarium wilt to be attacked at the same time by flea beetles.

It has been no small revelation to find out what goes on in my garden. It has been an even smaller pleasure.

That is the trouble with the garden books—not that they aren't good; they are far too good. For twenty-five cents you can buy a volume that would do if you intended to farm the whole Salinas Valley. A good many of us need that quality of advice about as much as we need a five-ton truck to haul away the produce. For instance, I have a booklet written by, and containing the lifetime research of, the extension professor of vegetable gardening of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, a Professor Nissley. I frequently feel that if Professor Nissley knew who was reading his book he would wilt as though attacked by the dread leaf hopper.

To be frank about it, Professor Nissley's book does not answer the kind of questions that arise in a garden like mine. I have read his section on lettuce in detail, and it tells more about lettuce than you would suppose there was to be told, but it sheds little or no light on what it is I am growing in my own lettuce bed. One of the types I am producing, if not inventing, is a handsome bushy growth that has neither the color of lettuce nor the characteristic crimping around the edges. The leaves of this botanical sport are shaped more like those of a maple tree, and are several shades darker than any lettuce described in Professor Nissley's work, except that the stuff is pale and sickly on the under leaves as if trying to look like blanched celery.

Another place in which Professor Nissley's invaluable reference work does not fit my amateur problems is his section on carrots. He describes five or six good varieties, including the Chantenay and the Imperator. He tells of the Nantes, too, which is short and fat, and the Hutchinson, which appears from the illustration to be only slightly smaller over all than a good ear of corn. It would be a pleasure to raise any of these.

What I have developed, however, is apparently a ne'er-do-well, or Reverse Hutchinson, that runs to fancy tops and little or no carrot. It is a flashy little bush, as thick and luxurious as a Civil War beard, and would look beautiful for potting and putting in hotel lobbies. That handsome fernery, however, is as false a front as ever concealed a worthless nature. When you seize this foliage and uproot it, up comes a carrot about as thick as a string.

Where Professor Nissley and I part company is all too clear. He describes his carrots as containing vitamins A, B-1, B-2, and C. Mine could be described as looking as if they needed them. His carrots contain water, protein, fat, ash, calcium, fiber, sugar, and starch, the book says. Mine don't even contain carrot.

It is not Professor Nissley's fault that his book falls so far short of meeting the needs of gardens like mine; he happens to know the respectable kind of vegetables, that's all, and I get the Dead End Kids. I admire his learning,

and wish him success back at the New Jersey Experiment Station. Some day when he tires of orthodox gardening, and wants to see a joint where everything is experimental, I hope he'll look me up.

My Day

WHAT a day I had yesterday, and you had, too, but it's my typewriter, so we'll discuss mine. If I can believe what I read in the ads and hear on my gabby little radio, I was astonished six or seven times before breakfast and experienced such a succession of wonders as would leave a really sensitive soul in a state of total emotional collapse long before noon.

Let's see. First off, I was awakened by the low throaty rasp of an alarm clock that was a Terrific Bargain at the time of its purchase and was described as giving off a musical hum that wakes the sleeper as gently as a mother's kiss.

Next I lighted a cigarette that is so mellow, so kind to the throat, and such an exquisite blend of the choicest and the rarest tobaccos, that it is a God's wonder I didn't lie there all day, like an opium eater, in sheer delight.

Then came a cup of wonder coffee, full-flavored and aromatic, picked just for me, from exactly the right side of the right mountains in the right country where coffee grows best. I think it was that kind. Maybe it was the other brand that is blended like music, with a dash of one kind of coffee bean to match the ripe fullness of the bass passages, a dash of another to match the smoothness of the strings, a third for something else—the mellow goodness of a B-flat clarinet, I believe—and then a fourth to provide the dash and piquancy of the brass section. I claim that is going to as much expense and trouble as it is possible to go in composing coffee and would ask the co. for a special blend based on more trombones and less horns in F except for the fact that I can't taste the first two or three cups much, anyway.

Well, after choking down a couple of slugs of coffee fit for Brahms himself, I went in to wash my teeth, and here there was a hard choice to make. There was one dentifrice which not only shines teeth brighter, whiter, but lasts longer, because of a new ingredient described simply as Amazing. There was a rival which by a revolutionary new discovery you don't have to squeeze out of a tube but can pour out of a bottle. Heigh-ho, what a banquet for the snappers!

And all this, mind you, in the first five or ten minutes of the day.

It's too bad I didn't have one of the Nubians keep a list of the astonishing details, for some of the amazements escape me. For instance, I can't remember just which exciting, alluring new soap I washed the features with, but believe me it was a kind that in ten days will make a blacksmith's mitts as soft as velvet. Not figuring on doing much alluring, at least not before sundown, I forgot to make a note of the brand.

Washing the last of its creamy goodness out of my eyes, I could see that even scrubbing with a love potion like this was not going to make my whiskers lovely and alluring, and it would be necessary to shave. This was really the low point of the morning, for I made use of some old-fashioned shaving soap that is not even startling, let alone revolutionary, amazing, or aphrodisiac, and the razor was pretty commonplace, too. About all its makers ever say for it is that it will take whiskers off.

The lotion with which I cauterized the wounds hardly merits mention, either; as I recall, it is simply The Choice of Celebrities, and merely superlative. The breakfast food which I shunned, however, was not only Temptingly Delicious but works a little revolution in personality; it sends you down to the office with a spring in your step, the advertising says, which is a nice change from the ordinary procedure of creeping in like a whipped dog. I gave it a pass, and chose the newspapers instead. There were one or two Incredible stories, one or two Amazing ones, and the ads told of several sensational offers in the way of merchandise that was being thrown on sale with reckless disregard of the consequences.

Turning to the book column, I read that two or three epochal and unforgettable books were ready. But for any one jaded with epochal reading matter, the movie ads spoke of a nice choice of smash hits, including both Laugh Riots and stories of Stark Horror. Personally, all I care for any more is a story of Flaming Lust and Paralyzing Terror set in a leaking submarine, but it is conceivable that a Smash Laugh Riot or Mirthquake would be all right as a starter, or emotional prelim. If it turned out to lack interest, you could always set the theater on fire.

That's the average day, as advertised: a mixture of the amazing, the astonishing, the incredible, the soul-withering, and the fabulous. Seems a little odd it can be so tedious.

Certainly it isn't radio's fault. Mine not only intones preposterous assertions about everything from beer to self-taught piano lessons, but does a great deal to lift listeners to this same fanciful level. And it may be that I'm new around here, but I still find something improbable about hearing a sales talk for a stomach remedy set to three-part harmony.

I missed an event that must be a milestone in radio entertainment, but just because I missed it is no reason why you should get the same easy out. My radio told me about it a week late. One of those fun programs was going on, with the studio audience taking part in all manner of pranks under the guidance of perhaps the most vivacious announcer in the business. Suddenly this funster began talking about a truly remarkable little antic he had staged the week before; and if he didn't have every rival radio producer biting his lip to a bloody pulp, then there isn't the competition in radio you might assume, for this stunt stepped so far ahead as to render all customary radio entertainment downright stilted.

"Last week," the announcer gurgled, "we asked our twenty million listeners to go to their door, and when some one came by—friend or perfect stranger—to go like this, bubble-ubble-ubble."

For any of you sticks who have not gone bubble-ubble-ubble lately, it should be explained that this is the noise made by riffling the lips with the fingers. The announcer went on to relate that literally thousands of these suggestible twenty millions had done as they were bidden, and had had a bushel of fun watching the look of surprise, not to say dismay, on the by-passers' faces.

NOW, plenty of radio shows go in for audience participation, meaning that they let the studio audience take part in the program, like the amnesia victims who appear at the various quiz shows and can't think of the answers to such teasers as "What has four legs and runs in horse races?" It would be interesting to know, incidentally, how some of these people find their way home from the studio. The point, however, is that here is audience participation raised to a new magnitude. It is one thing to ask a few hundred spectators to clown a little, gathered in one studio in one city. It is something far more imaginative to ask twenty million free citizens in their homes to step outside and make idiot noises at perfect strangers. That is pioneering, breaking new ground.

It stole a long lead on other audience-participation shows, and I doubt if rival producers can ever catch up. You could ask your listeners to go to the window and whistle at strangers. You could ask them to wiggle their ears or crack their knuckles. You could ask them to go out and soap windows. You could ask them to thumb their noses at each other. You could ask them to spin around until they get dizzy. They might do it, too, but those are steals, and will never match the night when a nation-wide audience was asked to go into the open and thrum on its twenty million kissers.

Undoubtedly you have thought a great deal about the miracle of radio, as it is often called, and the magic by which it erases space, tames the lightning, and makes it carry messages about soap. You have also wondered about the possible effect of bringing entire nations, as it were, around one table. Well, don't give it another thought. Just step to the door and say bubble-ubble-ubble.

As for me, I have no time for problems of that sort as I have still to dope out what a Lovely Bride would know about soap that her old lady wouldn't know better. Lis-

tening to the daytime radio serials one afternoon, while sitting at home with a broken leg (while friends who had come to top my accident story with their own were outside playing on my crutches), I heard a lot of talk about soap during a fairly representative day in the serials. The heroine in one of the stories was in tears as the action began, and it developed a visitor was coming to dinner and the poor battered soul felt sure she would drop the stew. Right when things looked darkest, friends with whom she had been discussing the crisis said they'd pitch in and help. Why they didn't think of it fifteen minutes sooner, many will say, provides a nice element of suspense.

As a matter of fact, the most interesting character of the afternoon appeared in one of the commercials. She was a Mrs. Klobber, or something of that sort, who, it was explained, used to be "a dishpan dreamer." What she dreamed about they didn't say, nor just how she induced this state, although apparently that was done by immersing the hands in a pan of suds. The psychology

books will go far before they top the case of a babe who falls into a dream state when she gets her hands wet, and I would like to know more about this dishwater De Quincey, but all they said was that she had now adopted the kind of soap advertised on the program in question. You would expect the next statement to be that, along with having dreams, she was now having hallucinations in Technicolor or, at the very least, seeing mirages. But no. All they said was that in no time at all Mrs. Klobber's hands had turned so lovely that she was tickled pink. "I'm the happiest woman in Louisville," she gloated. With a pair of mitts that lovely it was pretty obvious Mrs. Klobber would never risk them in dishwater again.

One thing many must find a little irksome about the folksier of the daytime sagas is the frequent assumption that you are tuning in from a tenement. "This is the story," the announcer will murmur, "of life in Cowbell Corners, among simple, plain, down-to-earth people just like you. We will meet Henry, an ignorant but lovable share-cropper; his wife, Lilly, who only got as far as the fourth grade; their two mongrel dogs; and Uncle Thurlow, who has just come over from his quarters in the county poor farm. Just plain, wholesome, shabby, underprivileged nobodies like yourselves, having their troubles, having their joys, but never getting anywhere, just like you. As we enter today we find Henry eating a hasty breakfast, preparatory to going over to the railroad, where he steals coal. Lilly is chipping out an arrowhead."

Well, gents, you can go climb a rope. We 'uns had a floor in our shanty, and furthermore it was quarter-sawed oak.

We'll even have new gunny sacks for the windows, might be, if I can finish a little song-writing job I am doing for Lanny Ross, the singer. Why is it, he asked a little wistfully on the radio one night, that nobody ever writes a song about North Dakota? Frankly, it never occurred to me that there would be much demand for a number like that, but if Mr. Ross can wait a little longer, I hope to have something ready for him. Tentatively, my North Dakota ballad expresses the thought that "Life ain't no lark in old Bismarck." There will be a final passage in which a native son of that underpopulated though sunburned state says that what he's dreamin' and what he's wishin' is to see somebody try to get him back there, except by extradition.

It may be, Mr. Ross, that one explanation for music's strange lapse in this respect is the difficulty of finding words that rhyme with Dakota. "I've had more than my quota of North Dakota" is all that suggests itself so far, unless you will settle for use of the abbreviation N. D. That allows a great deal more literary elbow room, as almost anything rhymes with N. D., including "not a tree," "nothing to see," and "not for me."

The kind of song I'm trying to write for you, Lanny, would be kind of a musical narrative—see?—with plenty nostalgia. It would start out with a fellow sitting in a luxurious twenty-room duplex, we'll say in New York or Chicago, and dreaming fitfully of his old boyhood home on a farm thirty miles from Pierre. The last time he set eyes on it, he remembers, the summer sun was burning the paint right off the house and laying the earth open like a busted watermelon, and his fondest recollection is that they sure needed rain. Now he is far, far away from those dear scenes, living in ease and comfort, surrounded by every luxury that money can buy, but what wouldn't he give, is the idea, just for another taste of those home-grown hard times and the chilblains he used to have all winter.

Just to hear the winter wind whistle through the living room once more, just to ride that old plow through clods as hard as brickbats—it is to avoid just that that our hero has barricaded himself in his living room as our story opens.

Undoubtedly life in North Dakota has its unsuspected charms, and if a fellow could think of them, he might very well turn out a song that would become just as famous as Carry Me Back to Old Virginny. Lacking anything more original, I may borrow the melody of another well known number, Home on the Range. It would be the work of a minute to adapt that one to a North Dakota setting. Making it read, for instance, like this: "Oh give me a hut by the side of a rut, where the land is as flat as a chair; where seldom is heard a discouraging word, and it's eighty-four miles to Pierre."

One nice thing about it, Mr. Ross. If you can wait, I feel sure the former North Dakotans can, too.

My Secret

DEAR SIR: Your company writes to ask if I have made any arrangements for buying Christmas cards. I am sorry to be a churl, but I am not going to tell you. You deserve to know the reason behind this unseemly sales resistance, however, and here's why.

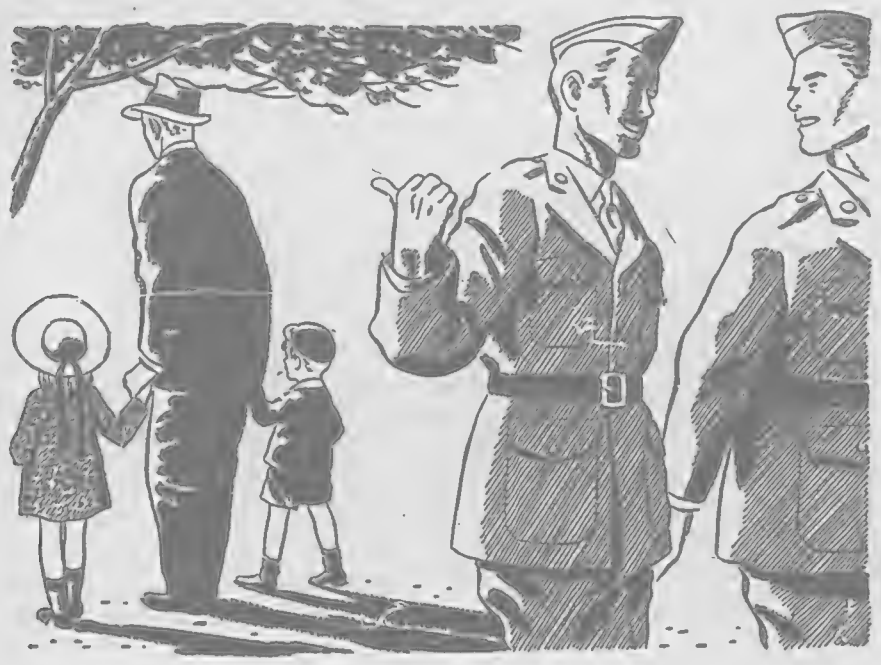
There was a time when this shy violet was what is called "a private citizen." Well, friend, in recent months and years he has become about as private as a rental library book. The Internal Revenue Department knows every penny I make, which is a sordid chapter I would prefer kept quiet; the draft board has a description of every scar and dimple. My credit rating can be obtained by making a telephone call; there must be a dozen good complete records of every job I ever held; and the brand of my religion is on file more places than I have been to church.

If there were any shreds of privacy left, they vanished the day that first long questionnaire came in from the draft board. Do you remember that one? It called for a description of a man's private life that covered income and outgo in fascinating detail. Whoever read that exhaustive little survey knows things about my affairs I didn't know myself.

My childhood diseases are a matter of record in the offices of various doctors and schools; the police have my fingerprints, and the state knows the number on my automobile motor, although I don't. I can't think of any one who has a picture of me in my bath, but aside from that

there is almost nothing I have been able to keep to myself. Should all the blanks and questionnaires be assembled at one place, they would make a dossier that would do for Franz von Papen. More homely, intimate details are available on this lackluster subject than I would read about George Washington.

I did have one hidden passage there for a while. There was a time when nobody knew that I cannot operate a turret lathe or automatic screw machine, but the Occupational Questionnaire took care of that. The government now has a description of precisely the kind of work I am



doing, together with a handy list of about three hundred things I am no good for. The world doesn't know that much about Einstein or Wordsworth, nor does it care.

That was an eerie little experience, that Occupational Questionnaire. Even after hearing themselves called physical shambles, or 4-F, or over age, or nonessential, or even super-nondeferrable, meaning that their civilian work is surpassed in total uselessness only by palm reading and horseshoe pitching—even after that, thousands of men will agree it was the Occupational Questionnaire that first put them in their place.

Listed in this humiliating little confession were 319 occupations regarded as useful and worth while. Are you a scarfer? Well, frankly, no. Well, are you a tube bender, a wire drawer, or a hostler, railroader? Are you an internal key-seating machine operator, an upholsterer, a pulpit man, a melter? If you can't do anything in those lines, are you an economist, veterinarian, personnel manager, historian, social worker, or lawyer? Look, we're giving you plenty of chances. Is there nothing you can do?

Well, you couldn't do any of the 319, the chances are, but along with proving yourself worthless, you were asked to cite a wealth of detail, and describe what on earth you do that keeps you from being a public charge. I finished that examination whimpering. The part about "Have you a social security number?" I could answer, and I passed the part about citizenship with flying colors. I could also come forward with a middle name and an address, as requested at the top of the paper. Those were the last questions to which it was possible to give a commendable answer. It reminded me of a time when I wandered into a calculus final instead of Math I for Backward Freshmen who add out loud.

Those papers haven't come back yet, but thousands of us have no doubt at all what our grade is, nor that we are on file somewhere marked "National drawbacks—shoot in case food runs low."

What's so good about watch repairers? In showing how to describe your work, that was the model they gave. "I can clean, adjust, and repair watches and clocks," said Teacher's Pet in the example. "I take them apart and examine the parts through an eyepiece to find which parts need repair. I repair or replace parts. Sometimes I make a new part, using a lathe and hand tools. I clean the parts and put them back together again."

Or just put them back together and *say* you cleaned them, eh, Mac?

Perhaps the unkindest line in this whole admission of ineffectuality, this abject self-criticism of your lifework, was the part asking you to name the job for which you are second best fitted, after your own. Once you flunked out on that, too, there was still another space in which to make a third choice, and outline the job for which you are third best suited. This created a feeling that might be described as one of extreme multiple inadequacy or no-earthly-goodness. First you prove you are a wartime liability, then you suggest something you can do even worse.

But getting back to your letter, chum. After signing the Occupational Questionnaire (and signing seems a little too much to ask) I had to tell how much sugar I owned, and later all about the family coffee supply, which wasn't impressive. There must be a dozen agencies, both private and governmental, that know precisely how much rent I pay. Then, of course, there are the Civilian Defense people. They have a perfect picture of the bed situation in my house, so as to know how many refugees could be accommodated, if they weren't too choosy, in the event of an air raid. They also know that I have a bucket but don't have an ax. ("Ax, hell—he ain't even got a hatchet," they are saying.) Along with all these other unknown intimates there is a schoolteacher who knows the very numbers on my tires. That is something I hadn't told my own mother.

See what I mean, friend? I am as public as a railroad station peanut machine, as exposed as an opened oyster. My every specification is on file somewhere. This is my one chance for reticence. You ask if I have bought my Christmas cards. Pal, I ain't telling.

Three to Get Ready

For a long time it was argued, and in his hearing, too, that a young father doesn't make a good soldier. Well, I would hate to come up against him in battle. To begin with, he has had a fine unlovely choice: whether to go, and be a patriot, and possibly a hero, meanwhile being something of a wife deserter; or to stay, and be somewhere between a good provider and a draft dodger.

No man wants to desert the bride and the tots. Or put it this way: He might enjoy deserting them a little, but doesn't want to duck his responsibility toward them. (I'm not talking about the lad who can move his children to the town house, and march away in an Abercrombie & Fitch uniform. My guy got married on a shoestring, and this is about the year he meant to start saving money.)

There is also the little matter of his age. He's probably in his thirties—a boy at heart, of course, but a little old for war or baseball. The chances seemed strong, as he debated what to do, that he would end up at a desk some place, making him feel like a male auxiliary of the Wacs, or applying his proved executive ability to the camp garbage disposal.

A man who has been through choices like that must arrive at the battle front, if he does, in a mood I would not care to meet. Also likely to produce a fine quarrelsome grouch is the kind of thing the draft officials have said about his usefulness. Never at any time in the discussion was there a newspaper story that said a lot of fine men could be produced by drafting fathers. On the contrary, the authorities talked about it as if it was a cross the armed forces might have to bear, a sad comedown, a last resort. You would think the act of becoming a father put a man on crutches.

"Beggars can't be choosers" was the tone of these announcements, "and it is conceivable the country may come to such a pass that it will be necessary to authorize local draft boards to pick out a few of the stronger fathers and send them along. All preparations have been made for this contingency, for even if it never becomes necessary to rely on these human derelicts, it is our duty to be ready, if such is our bitter cup.

"Of course," they usually continue, "the situation is not as black as it may sound," meaning to the military men who will be saddled with this burden. "Accepting fathers would not mean that we had to accept all of them.

Even if we are scraping the bottom of the manpower barrel, we will have a certain amount of better material coming in. For one thing, there are a number of lads turning eighteen each month, and that group, unmarred by fatherhood, can be counted on to fill important posts.

"There are also a certain number of tykes who, while only twelve or thirteen years old, are tall for their age. In addition, we could always fall back on the Spanish-American veterans and, after that, the Old Settlers. As still another ace in the hole, we could amend the immigration laws.

"You may be sure that every one of these alternatives has been given serious consideration. No one in any position of authority wishes to burden the armed forces with fathers if it can he helped. Some of us think it might be better to tap the Townsend clubs, instead, or arm the Brownies and the Sea Scouts. It cannot be expected that many of the fathers can be salvaged; the train ride would prove too much for many of them, while that first night away from home would see them dropping off like flies."

For all these insults, which ought to put a nice edge on a troubled man, the authorities did throw in one good laugh. That came in an announcement that a man would be given three weeks to get his affairs in shape, just like he has been trying to do for thirty-five years.

Let's see. When told to get his affairs in shape, our hero is on his way to borrow on the furniture so he can make a payment on a loan he made to meet a payment on the car the time the insurance premium fell due the same day the rent had to be paid. He had borrowed so much on that insurance policy that it might have been smarter to let it lapse, but this was an intricate question, and he had no time for pretty problems in finance—he needed dough. As things stand, he will be all right temporarily if he can cash a good-sized check right after the bank closes on Saturday, and then float enough of a loan to cover when the bank opens Monday.

He owes two or three months' pay here and there, not counting the small debts, like ten dollars he owes at the office, and five he ought to pay to square himself on a dinner check, plus a small tab at a couple of saloons, etc. The only reason he hasn't paid is that the income tax came due, which took the cash he had counted on to have the roof mended. Even so, he would have been in as good financial chaos as usual if it hadn't been for having the clutch fixed on the car.

These are small things; so is an adder. But the point is that if you outlined the average young father's financial structure as of a given moment, it would make the Insull empire look unimaginative. You would find a tangle that couldn't be straightened out in three weeks by Arthur Andersen and all his auditors. You don't untangle in three weeks a web it took a third of a lifetime to weave.

IF too much has been written here about fathers, it is easy to make amends. One of the most interesting figures in the war effort is, it seems certain, not even a married man. I refer to the Unknown Vegetarian who figured out that servicemen's children could be maintained on twelve dollars a month for the first child and ten dollars for the second.

These figures have since been amended, so that thirty dollars is allowed for the first child, and twenty dollars for each additional child. My hero, back from many years spent in the tropics, apparently has been getting reacquainted. Even so, he could have a mighty interesting afternoon if he would take twenty dollars and go out on a buying spree.

For instance, this optimistic childless repatriate might pick up a little snow suit, or a winter coat for a girl of ten, or a pair of high-topped boots, or a raincoat just like Daddy's, at five dollars more than Daddy would dare to spend. While out, he might also visit a drugstore, as we call them in this country, and try to kid the druggist out of a small vial of cod-liver oil or oil of percomorphum. These things were regarded as poisonous by the tykes of my day, but they are not so regarded by contemporary kiddies, who not only drink the costly stuff, at the price of sound bourbon, but lick the spoon.

From the drugstore the allowance expert might drift over to a toy department and shop for a few of those trifles that make children so happy. He ought to ask first, however, as the tots' specifications for things like this are so rigid as to make Army purchasing seem casual. Trifles, I mean, like a little costume dolly, only six dollars plus tax, or a life-size airplane carrier with thirty planes, or a simple set of power-driven tools, or a storybook, at five fifty, on airplane design. Naturally my spendthrift friend won't be able to find everything there was before the war—the cute little tricycles no longer have two-way radios for instance—but he can find many wartime substitutes. It is amazing what they have been able to do with nonstrategic materials, especially in the way of keeping prices the same.

The way to do it, if the fellow will take a malicious suggestion, is simply to walk into a store dealing in all the things children need, toss ten or twenty dollars on the counter, assuming he can find a clerk, and say, "Shoot the works." It won't get him much in the way of merchandise, but it ought to get a hearty laugh from any parents who are near by.

Eat Strenuously

IF you have been wondering what else you can do to help the war effort, you may be surprised to hear that you are helping without knowing it, especially if your table manners are a little offensive and you are something of a boor. I learned this from a weekly newspaper supplement. While a great many odd and trivial things have been hailed as helping win the war, this was the first to discover a way to feel patriotic about dirty feeding.

The story is told in pictures, with words to tell what the people in the pictures are doing, and pictures to prove it. "Using fingers" is one of the titles in this clarion call to messiness, and the picture shows a well groomed girl of obvious and determined culture eating a chop. Realizing that these are stern times and call for stern measures, she is holding it in her fingers. It ain't that she doesn't know better. She has simply parted with manners for the duration; she is a dinner-table commando.

"With point rationing and a shortage of food making it necessary for every housewife to shop with extra care," says the story, "it's up to the average citizen to get the most out of his meals, no matter how 'etiquette' may have to be altered in the process."

The same rough tactics are advocated for eating soup. Naturally, no matter how tough you are, you can't take your soup in your fingers; but you may tilt the soup bowl. "It's quite polite to get that last drop of soup," the story declares, "so that the rest of the meal may be lighter." This is illustrated with a picture of a couple of girls tilting their soup bowls, just like it says. That this is a deliberate violation by a couple of kids who got plenty class in peacetime is shown by the fact that they are spooning out, not in.

Dunking toast is another daring maneuver recommended for these topsy-turvy times and the heck with etiquette. Butter and coffee are not to be wasted, it is explained, "and it's no crime to get the most out of them." Just how you get more toast, coffee, or butter by dunking the toast is a pretty puzzling angle, but this is no time for quibbling. Still another picture in this gallery of rugged eating or patriotic gaucherie shows a modern minuteman of the breakfast table boldly squeezing his grapefruit (and the heart of the Citrus Growers' Association) so as to get the last drop of that, too. It was also asserted that it is now all right to mop the dinner plate with a hunk of bread, so as to get the last drop of gravy or other liquids and damn the torpedoes.

Now here is a way to feel heroic even while eating a lamb chop, and I don't think gluttony ever was put on a higher plane. There is an alternative to this star-spangled piggishness, of course—simply to eat a little less. Still, that doesn't mobilize the nation's every ounce of gravy, and this does. Nor will it have the same bang in it for men, women, and editors who need to feel important even while eating. Personally, I am taking out the dinner bell and replacing it with a bugle,

and the next time I sink a piece of toast in my coffee, I intend to give myself three rousing cheers. If I burn my mouth, will I get a wound stripe?

Right on the heels of learning that we might have to sacrifice good table manners in favor of some of our favorite breaches of etiquette (but could take it very big indeed) I learned that my drawers had gone to war. The company still makes them, but the drawers are a war, or austerity, model.

It was only to be expected, and, mind you, this is not whining. We have to make many of these sacrifices, whether we notice them or not. The whole world is in a state of flux. Items of everyday life that you might regard as trifling have marched off to war with the cheers of their manufacturers ringing in our ears.

You know how it goes. No pleats on trousers, little or no whipping cream, smaller magazine margins, and so on. Hotels are limiting the number of towels to a customer, the towels you used to have to phone five times to get at all. Dry cleaners flatly refuse to clean full dress suits. The length of household matches has been cut an eighth of an inch. It takes a mighty flexible mind, is what I always say.

Considering all this, it was inevitable that drawers manufacturers could not continue in the same old status quo. Drawers as Usual is out. But you have to say this for my guy: he softened the blow with every means in his power, and went to great pains to make sure customers can master the switch-over.

The change consists of using buttons on the waistband. ("And buttonholes," the card of directions adds. They may have to give you buttons, but they don't forget to give you buttonholes to go with them.) Formerly there was nothing but a little elastic. This kind of adjusted itself for size; it was automatic. The wearer hardly had to give it a thought. If wide awake enough to pull the panties over his feet, and shrewd enough not to leave them down around his ankles, his underwear worries were over. But that was peace, and this is war.

"Uncle Sam's rubber shortage," says a card with the new pair, "is acute. In the interest of winning the war, all rubber must be conserved for use by the armed forces. We have therefore gladly surrendered, for the duration, all use of rubber in these garments. This means an important change in waistband construction.

"You will note that the waistband of this garment is closed by a button and buttonhole on the right side. Two buttons give you room for a one and a half inch reduction of the waistband." It appeared for a minute that this meant "in case things really get tough," but instead, it refers to making the garment fit. Careful instructions are provided, for the makers don't want their customers sitting around in helpless confusion, trying to puzzle out what on earth to do with a button and buttonhole.

THE first step, numbered No. 1, is outlined as follows: "Button to the button which gives snugness of waistband desired." I get that, all right. It means you take this here button and button it. If it is too loose, or too tight, then you unbutton it and try the other button. But what if I can't do that, what if I get my fingers caught in the buttonhole? Will Mr. Cooper come and button me?

Instruction No. 2, on the same red-white-and-blue card, tackles the problem of what to do if the shorts don't fit after being laundered. "If the buttons do not provide sufficient reduction of waistline," it says, "remove first button and have it sewn on at a point where sufficient reduction is made possible." There is an illustration showing a pair of scissors in position to snip off the button, for gents who don't know how a button is removed, and taking one thing with another, it is growing painfully clear that the people who wear my favorite brand of lingerie are not very bright.

Let me see if I've got it now. If they are too loose after being washed, then the chances are the waistband is too big for your waist, you sylphlike creature you; a potbellied sylph, too, considered quite a rarity. In that puzzling situation, you take a pair of scissors and snip the loose threads of the first button until the button comes loose and falls to the floor. But do not leave it there, and be mighty careful not to swallow it either. Instead, you get somebody, preferably somebody with a needle and thread, to sew it back on again. Don't sew it at the same place, though. Sew it at a new place, where it will make the waistband tighter. Should you notice yourself growing red in the face after this, or unconscious, then the chances are you have moved the button too far.

It may be, of course, that not all the citizens are up to this, and some may have to have their scanties sewed on for the duration. Are there instructions for that?

Should a Lady Thumb, and Other Issues

IN times like these, calling for violent readjustments in almost every branch of life, with the one gleaming exception of my pay, it is reassuring to have such a cool head around as that of Mrs. Emily Post. The nation's manners couldn't possibly be in better hands than Mrs. Post's, although the problems created by a time of flux are such that a less flexible person would likely blow her well groomed top trying to rule on them. For instance, take the question of whether an admiral should hold a door for a Wave. Now here is a pretty pickle for fair.

If the admiral is primarily a gentleman and only secondarily an admiral, and the Wave is primarily a lady and only secondarily a female salt, or saltess, then obviously it is the gent's duty to hold the door open and let the babe precede him. But if sex has been forgotten in the grim equality of war, then it is the Wave's duty to hold the door for her superior officer.

As a lifelong reader of Mrs. Post, I claim I got pretty classy manners, but will be frank to admit I couldn't cope with a dilemma like that. No one wants to forgo discipline, and yet no one wants to forgo sex either, including, perhaps, the admiral, eh, Addy? It looks like a stalemate; but it didn't to Em.

Navy men, she said, are so gallant that they would hold the door open no matter what the difference in rank, as long as there was that justly celebrated difference in gender. How many hours of indecision and embarrassment this ruling may have saved can only be conjectured. Here, shaping up, was a social bottleneck of the worst kind. But they don't come too tough for Em. She took that problem and pinned its ears back.

Still another she solved—and here again, she did it before most of us were even awake to the dangerous possibilities—is how a lady hitchhiker should act in relation to the gent from whom she has just bummed a ride to work because of the gas and tire situation. Obviously, when you give it a little thought, here is a situation that plays hob with the customary rules of conduct.

Here on the corner is a chick who—why, if you had so much as honked to her six months ago, she would have cut you cold, being a perfect lady, very hard to pick up.

But now she is standing on the corner in need of transportation to work. Along comes a lad she doesn't know from Adam, never saw before in her life, but his car is empty, so she gives him the thumb.

He pulls over to the curb, throws open the door, and in she gets. So here she is riding along in the privacy of the morning rush hour with a perfect stranger—and maybe it is one of the very cads whose inviting glance and coaxing horn she has turned down flat a dozen times in the past. If that isn't a social breakdown, if that doesn't throw decorum up for grabs, then I'll put in with you.

Mrs. Post's coolheaded advice was to keep this admittedly informal situation as formal as possible. If the bounder attempts to make conversation, she said, the lady hitchhiker should steer it carefully to the subject of the weather, and keep it there. She will almost be forced to reveal where she is going, of course, and may do so without loss of her good name, but should fend off questions about the nature of her work, in case the cad is also a spy. Exactly how to do this, Mrs. Post left to a girl's own judgment. "I ain't saying,"

might do as a hint that this is an improper line of questioning, or something noncommittal like "Mind your own business, nosy," or etc.

Then back to the weather. It narrows the conversation sharply, just keeping on that one topic, but still and all, it is easy to see Mrs. Post's point. These are strangers, and must act as much like strangers as the facts permit. The one bright spot in a thoroughly difficult situation is that many men will not feel like talking much at that time in the morning, anyway, and the chances are a girl could maintain quite a silence without being thought ill-bred. The thing that surprises me, though, is the way Mrs. Post knocks problems like that right over the fence. The chances are Em don't thumb a ride herself once in a blue moon.

You'll Love It Here

My vacation plans are all made, and I recommend them to other white-collar workers who want a rest from the studied neglect they have experienced all these years down at the office. I am going to spend my vacation in one of the factories whose Help Wanted ads list the advantages of letting their firm hire you.

Is there music while you work? Of course there is music while you work, and if you don't like it, just tell the foreman and we will shoot the orchestra conductor.

The work is light, the surroundings are cheerful and pleasant, and you will be working with a peach of a bunch of kids, too. Do you need experience? Why shucks, no, lambie. You just come on out here, all ignorant as you are, and our kind, sweet-natured old instructors will train you while you are listening to the mood music.

Did I mention that we will pay you while you learn? Sure we will, and glad to do it. The paymaster is sitting over there in the corner biting his fingernails to the knuckle and crying like a baby over this policy, but don't you pay any attention to him. If he gets on your nerves, we'll put a tarpaulin over him.

I had one of these ads that was a third of a column long, with that entire space devoted to a catalogue of the factory's attractions. Special emphasis was given the food. The food is not only good, but just to prove it, the management went into detail about the pie that is served. It is an inch and a half thick, if memory serves, and the management positively guarantees, in writing, that the crust will be flaky.

How's the pay? Why, charming, like everything else in this industrialized picnic ground. You make good money to start with, they buy you four or five kinds of insurance, there is plenty of overtime, advancement is assured, raises are automatic, and there is a bonus at Christmas. In nice clean new bills, no doubt.

In addition, I believe they said that this little Eldorado is close to transportation, and if you are at all nervous about working late at night, the superintendent will walk home with you.

That is the mood beautiful. That is precisely the mood many of us have always wanted to find in an employer, especially our own. If the company in question will send me a photograph of the principal executives and guarantee me a lathe on the south side of the building with a pleasant view, I will appreciate it. It's not my line of work, and I am not going to clutter up their place with another head to train, but would like to have the material to show my own employers how sweet management can be if only it is desperate.

Another thing poetry lovers shouldn't miss is the ads for a maid. Did I say ads? These are valentines. If you call at one pleasant Chicago home some evening soon and are greeted by a saucy new maid who seems slightly knobby in the knees and could use a shave, it will be the undersigned. What is coaxing me to a career as a domestic is an ad that began, "This Is Your Home."

"Do you want surroundings where cheerfulness and friendliness prevail—a place you can make your home?" it asked.

"We have seven lovely newly decorated rooms, including one for you, with private bath and radio. Our neighborhood is clean and quiet; transportation is good.

"We are a congenial family of two adults and two school children, and we need you for household duties and to help with the cooking. No windows. No laundry. White or colored equally acceptable if neat, reliable, and competent. Stay or go."

Go? Who would leave a Blue Heaven like that?

Note the working conditions. The house is newly decorated, the neighborhood is clean, the family promises to be congenial. The maid won't have to wash any windows, she won't have to do any laundry. She is needed for household duties, which we may presume means a little occasional sweeping and dusting, and she may be asked to cook—no, to help with cooking.

There is a bright new room awaiting her, but even there, there is nothing compulsory about it. Should these seven lovely newly decorated rooms begin to seem inadequate, she can go home. And in case she does, there is good transportation. Short of promising to carry her to the bus station piggyback, it is hard to see how any one can top it.

What clinched the deal with me, however, was the reference to salary. In small type, the ad said the maid who took this job would receive "top pay." In case that wasn't clear, there was next a line of caps, which said, "You name the salary."

Now, mind you. I don't say the work isn't hard. I don't say good maids aren't hard to find. I just say that a job where you name your own salary is a better deal than some male employees I know are getting from the flinty-hearted parties they work for now.

Of course, I would have to lay down one or two small conditions. In the first place, I would expect them to get the Fascists out of the State Department, and in the second, I may need the use of the living room a couple of nights a week for poker parties. But if these requests are granted, then they got themselves a new maid.

The Crisis in Seating

Unless you read the same poignant piece in the New York Times that I did, you can't possibly imagine the breath-taking problems in protocol that arise these days in Washington. The dirty truth is that this war is playing hob with dinner parties.

Just where to seat the Peruvian minister in relation

to the wife of a Lend-lease official is never an easy question, but according to the Times the war has complicated an already complex situation by bringing in a lot of strategic and important ladies and gents whose exact social rating cannot well be determined. T. V. Soong was cited as an example. Mr. Soong arrived in Washington on an unofficial visit. He is the Chinese Foreign Minister, but cannot be treated as an accredited envoy unless he is working at it. Whether Mr. Soong is official or unofficial might make a difference of

two or three places at the dinner table. The problem, when he arrives unofficially, is to give him a place of honor and yet snub him, delicately, for not being present officially.

There is also the Archduke Otto. Otto is pretender to the throne of Austria. As pretender he would be entitled to a very good seat indeed. But what turns a protocol expert's hair a pretty gray, the Times explains, is that Otto's pretensions are not recognized by our State Department. This makes Otto an unrecognized pretender to a nonexistent or closed-out throne, and a social problem child for fair.

The Times told of another crisis when Prime Minister Churchill and President Benes of Czechoslovakia all but appeared at the same dinner, which would have produced such a clash of social priorities that somebody in the State Department undoubtedly would have had to commit expiatory suicide, probably by strangling himself with a white tie.

No improvising, however daring, seemed likely to solve the Churchill-Benes dilemma. The White House was giving a state dinner for President Benes when Churchill flew in. If Churchill attended President Benes' dinner, who would sit at President Roosevelt's right? There was absolutely nothing in the books to cover the case apparently, and the protocol experts were at their wit's end. It could have been a shambles, you will readily understand, except that just in the nick of time the Prime Minister saved the day by a simple though imaginative decision. In a master stroke very few Washington guests seem to think of, the Prime Minister stayed home. He ate his supper at the British Embassy.

The trouble, or so it seems to me, lies in trying to get the guests around the same table. The Union Oil Company of Los Angeles solves its own caste problem much more adroitly, according to a story in the magazine American Business, by using three types of desks.

"Union Oil Company," says American Business, "standardized on three sizes of desks: executive, junior executive, and clerical. . . . About seven hundred new desks are now in use at Union Oil, all twenty-nine inches high."

Just how the three types differ, the story doesn't make clear, and this would be interesting, too, inasmuch as all three are the same height. What I prefer to think is that the junior executives' desks are exactly like the executive model except that there are Mother Goose characters on them. On the other hand, the junior executives' relative insignificance may be expressed in the accessories. The junior model, for instance, may have a water jug but no glass, which would help keep the occupant in his place, or it may have push buttons that are not connected.

Far more interesting, however, is the way Union Oil cracks the problem of getting a stenographer close enough to hear without being so close as to disrupt thinking about Union Oil. "Desks of all employees who dictate considerably," the story says, "have a knee well for the stenographer, who can thus sit up close to the desk, in a comfortable and correct posture. A panel, midway in a knee well, separates the stenographer's knee well from the person regularly using the desk."

Thus, in the Little Daisy No Footie Playing in Business Hours model, the stenographer's knees are not only concealed but barricaded. What do they do with the clerks? Tape their eyes?

Great Day in the Morning

You don't have to be the seventh son of a seventh son to suspect that the status of the adult male after this war is not going to be what it has been. Certainly it won't bear much resemblance to the place he occupied in society before the war. Personally, I can't see much in store for him except running for public office, committing certain felonies impossible for women to perform, and catching ballet dancers. The dolls are taking over everything else, and doing it with considerable skill, I must say (but don't believe).

Almost every day brings some new example of how the women are mastering some highly technical trade or craft, learning some knack always regarded as a purely masculine accomplishment. A common photographic pose shows a group of lady mechanics studying the ins and outs of the automobile for instance.

"None of these babes can be graduated from this class in advance automotive engineering," it will be explained, "until she can rebuild the distributor of a ten-ton moving van under shellfire in a heavy rain.

"A favorite stunt on the part of the instructress is to hold examinations in which the girls are required to take a Diesel engine apart blindfolded in a blackout. In the picture above, the sixteen-year-old subdeb

at the left is welding a broken crankcase over an open fire while her companion retreads the tires and corrects the cylinders to fire in three-quarters time.

"Later, before they are granted their certificates, each girl will grind a set of valves while looking in the other direction, and haul a load of gray iron castings from Denver to Sacramento in reverse gear."

Another common photograph shows a group of efficient-looking lasses at work in machine shops, usually standing in front of a mechanical monster that looks as if it would baffle Charles F. Kettering himself. "While only eighteen," the words will explain, "Betty is doing the work of four expert machinists. In the picture above, she is operating a ten-ton hydraulic gear cutter with which she will machine a 400-pound block of alloy steel to a tolerance of three ten thousandths of an inch. Betty is one of three sisters, all mechanically expert. Alice, the older sister, is a boiler-maker in Lafayette, Ind., while Connie, the kid of the family, was the excavating contractor for Boulder Dam.

"Betty goes with an unemployed auto salesman whose parents have said they may marry when Betty gets to be a chief machinist at $103.90 a week."

Now it's obvious that, for better or for worse, the standing of men is not going to be the same in a post-war world full of women as proficient as all that. And even if the women now holding men's jobs don't keep them after the war, it seems inevitable that they will learn too much for any one's good.

In the days of women's industrial innocence, women frequently had little understanding of their husbands' work, and while they knew instinctively that it couldn't be very important, they did not have detailed evidence. "I don't know just what it is Thurman does," you would hear a wife say, "but I know that it is extremely tiring and keeps him under a constant nervous strain. Highly technical, too, he tells me."

This did a husband no harm. In fact, it was his shield and buckler, it gave him a little standing in the home. "I had a hell of a day," he could say as he dragged himself across the threshold. "Kindly keep the children quiet and let me have my dinner on a tray. Along about four fifteen this afternoon we ran out of the concentrated silurgium and couldn't find any this side of Nantucket, where the big silurgium deposits are.

I don't know how I stand this. I was on the verge of resigning this afternoon, but the board of directors came over in a body and begged me to see them through, so I stayed. Along with that, one of the cross-ventilated habilizers broke down and I had to fix it personally. Nobody seems to do any work around there but me."

But if his helpmeet has spent a year or so in the same kind of work, or the same office, these accounts of the day's battle will have to be edited a little toward the side of realism. They will be subject to strict interpretation and may not evoke the sympathy produced in the past.

"Why didn't the mechanical superintendent fix the habilizer?" the wife is likely to ask. "He always did when I worked there. And what is this nonsense about silurgium? All we ever used was a little laundry soap. Furthermore, I could always make it home in forty-seven minutes, whereas it takes you an hour and a half. Why?"

No, this new insight into working conditions is not going to make for domestic harmony. On the contrary, it will put more strain on married bliss, and there is no assurance that marriage can stand it.

ALONG with knowing far too much about manufacturing processes, women with experience in war plants will know altogether too much about pay and advancement. Husbands lost ground enough when they let their wives learn when payday is. In the future, far too many lasses will know exactly what a man should be making, what he would have to do to make more, and if he doesn't get ahead very fast, will know why. This is likely to work wonders with our mounting divorce rate.

It may be this view is altogether too pessimistic. It may be that serving a term as her husband's replacement will give a girl a new appreciation of what a man goes through, of the curious character of employers, of the odd happenstances that can thwart a promising career. Hearing about the beautiful pay that is to be made in war plants, and then discovering that those figures are for a toolmaker working nights in a dynamite factory, may be both educational and mellowing. The girl who has worked long and hard for thirty-six dollars and fifty cents a week, and is laid off a week for being absent a day, may end up thinking of her husband as both rugged and industrious. She might even come to think of the poor wight as something of a hero. About time, too.

On the other hand, if women choose to stay in their jobs, there is little a gentleman can do about it. It is one thing to woo some luscious young switchwoman or bartendress and marry her, but it is something else to deprive her of her job. If she likes this kind of work, only a cad would take a job away from a woman. A little light brainwork may be all that is in store for men. It is the prospect the adult male will face bravely. We are too pretty to work anyway.

Besides that, there are several little treats I want to allow myself after the war, one of which is to ride on the French Line's ships and watch them slay a lobster. I came across a description of this in an ad from Fortune magazine dated 1931, and, friends, this little pageant makes sun worship seem brief and unimpressive.

"This is a true picture of a lobster," the ad begins. "He looks unusual. By all standards of art and flavor, he is. But passengers who have crossed on the French Line know him well.

"Only this morning he was alive and pugnacious, in a salt-water aquarium on board. He was snapped out of it. He was boiled."

(There, sonny, is a little lesson for us all. He was feeling pretty good. He was alive and pugnacious. He was alert and aggressive. "Pull yourself together," they said to him. "I'm in fine shape now," he said. And he was right. So, in reward, they boiled him.)

You would think the lobster liked it, from the way the description continues.

"They mounted on a rock on a silver platter his empty vermilion shell; the meat of him was minced fine and contrived into canapés. Each canapé was then spread with canary-yellow mayonnaise, and on that a mischievous pattern was spotted in truffle."

Do they stop at that? Not by a damned sight.

"Each canapé," the story goes on, "was thereupon mounted on a silver skewer and stuck in the back of the lobster rampant. The whole was frosted with sea-spray jelly, to make him look just out of the water, and the triumphant result was served to a table of four."

I was confident that the next paragraph would tell how the chef, having achieved this triumph, kills himself to preserve the secret, but it turns out the table of four isn't even supposed to like it much.

"For what?" the story goes on.

"As an hors d'oeuvre, merely—an incidental appetizer for another typical French Line luncheon. Were these favored passengers, then? No—except as all passengers on the French Line are favored passengers. They just happened to feel lobsterish, so the chef gratified that feeling with a typical French difference."

Our boiled and minced friend, the pugnacious lobster, apparently came through his harrowing experience in good shape, for the ad closes on this note: "This lobster, then, begs you to accept his invitation." Right after the war I hope to take him up on that, some day when I am feeling lobsterish.

In will come the canapé, on a silver skewer, frosted in sea-spray jelly. The mayonnaise is canary-colored, all right, and on that canary-colored mayonnaise is a pattern made of truffle. The moment I dream of is the time when I can rise, yawn, point to the truffle with real French Line choosiness, and remark, "Take it away—it ain't mischievous."

There *is* one postwar prediction it is safe to make: The day peace comes will bring a great and welcome collapse in civilian character. For one thing, it will mean an end to all this incessant co-operation with the neighbors, all this radiant friendliness toward others who simply happen to rent shacks in the same block. "Nuts to the neighbors," will be the glad cry from a hundred thousand throats.

Furthermore, when that whistle blows it will catch other thousands riding in somebody else's car, thanks to the share-your-car program. At long last these guests will be able to open their lips, locked grimly for the duration. "I thought for a while," they will say firmly, "that it was the driving that upset me, and then I thought it was this silly crate of yours. As a matter of fact it was you. I want it understood it took a global war to get me to associate with the likes of you." And with that they will get out, pull the driver's hat over his ears, and never set foot again in any automobile other than their own, nor with any other driver at the wheel.

WHEN that glad day comes, you can waste anything you please, you can start yammering about the government once more, you can quit pretending taxes don't hurt you, you can be your old, crotchety, antisocial self again, restored to full citizenship. Ah, that will be a day. A jerk in an official position will be a jerk once more and fair game for the indignant citizenry. A silly proposal will be a silly proposal once again and not a war measure. A no-good in uniform will be a no-good and no longer a no-good who may be asked to die for his country. And you will hear The Star-Spangled Banner only on occasions that deserve it, and not at the close of every broadcasting period.

It will be possible to smirk a small smirk when a fat matron goes by on a bicycle she never needed anyway. It will be all right to suggest to a few thousand volunteer morale builders and duty explainers that they go soak their heads. And you can uproot the Victory Garden and throw the turnips at the block captain.

Ignorance will be ignorance, not a military secret. A hundred lines of business will lose "It's the war" as an alibi for poor quality and bad service. Tin-Pan Alley will go back where it belongs, leaving the writing of battle hymns to Julia Ward Howe.

Naturally, that day is going to have a far deeper meaning to soldiers than to civilians; but what you'll see among the civilians will be quite a sight—a whole population going back into character. It'll be a great day in the morning.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

HOLD your hat when you read **Crying at the Lock,** by **Adeline Rumsey.** You're going to meet a couple of wenches that make anything Clare Boothe introduced in The Women seem like staid back numbers from the Tuesday Afternoon Knitting and Tea Club.

And you're going to have a pretty fascinating time with a whole cast of characters most of whom are motivated by enough neuroses to agitate a bevy of psychiatrists for a lifetime.

Adeline Rumsey

To begin with, there is Dartley West, a nice enough guy, and rich too, who was dominated by his mother but who liked quiet things and who succeeded in overriding the maternal veto once long enough to buy a farm. But the second time he made a choice of his own he didn't come off so well. He married Natalie, whose childhood had left her with one of the most disturbing psychoses of all. Natalie finds it impossible not to err with various men almost whenever the situation is convenient.

But lest I be too frivolous about a book which does tell a compelling story and which deserves serious reading, let me say that Dartley and Natalie are truly in love and that they are so well handled as characters that they are wholly believable in this love, and that the tragedy implicit in such a situation is also well handled as part of a serious story.

The story opens after Natalie's death, when Dart is married again—this time even less successfully, to a calculating, scheming, rather attractive woman who has chosen him as a means to money and position. This is Mildred, a prime candidate for the most hated character in this season's crop of novels.

Soon after they return from their honeymoon and prepare to settle on the farm, Mildred clashes with Frannie Smith, an old friend of both Dart and Natalie. The Smiths, both Frannie and Peter, hope, of course, that Dart will find in Mildred the kind of wife he needs. But nothing could hold back the inevitable crash that is set in motion when Mildred tries to make Dart's world her own and to dominate him and it, when she attempts to dig back into the past, to probe at Dart through the story of Natalie.

For Mildred, once she had entangled and revealed herself there was no possibility but destruction. For Dart there is, finally, a better end—with a young, unspoiled, straightforward girl.

This is a sketchy account, but anything more would give away a remarkably well constructed story that makes you want to speed through it from beginning to dramatic end, and which, whatever you say afterward, will hold you excitedly every second.

Published by Simon & Schuster, New York. Price, $2.50.

TRY your best not to miss **Ten Escape from Tojo,** the story of **Commander Melvyn H. McCoy** and **Lieutenant Colonel S. M. Mellnik,** as they recounted it to **Lieutenant Welbourn Kelley.**

Lt. Welbourn Kelley

It is the authentic account of two men who witnessed the Japanese cruelty inflicted upon the prisoners taken on Bataan and Corregidor and who somehow hoarded both enough strength and crude equipment to escape. It tells more than the atrocity stories which appeared in the papers and it gives a good idea of what the new order of Co-prosperity will mean to the luckless Orientals who have to live under it. An exciting, enraging book.

Published by Farrar & Rinehart, New York. Price, $1.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

BY TED SHANE

HORIZONTAL

1 Name the science of military supply
9 What insect captures and keeps slaves?
12 Soup is an anagram for what?
13 Burden
14 Seth who was the first Mayor of Greater New York?
15 In the '20s it was fashionable to keep cool with whom?
16 What do the boulangers in France do?
17 Polonius in Hamlet is often played as an awful what?
18 Name a Yorkshire city known for its pottery
20 What, attached to a helmet, denoted medieval rank?
21 Seidel is an anagram for what?
23 What's a synonym for a thingumbob?
24 Complete: "Of Time and the----," Thomas Wolfe
25 Rizzuto of the Yankees was especially proficient at what?
26 Abbr. for a Canadian province
27 Name the biggest and best known striker in England
28 What state is Rep. Rankin from? (abbr.)"
29 What's a constant urge to go buy—buy?
30 Pronoun
31 What is Portugal's most famous wine?
32 What's a secret thing about a fraternity?
34 A little coupler
35 Name a former Governor General of the Philippines
36 A second generation American-born Japanese is called a what?
37 What is the most widely read book in America today?
39 What has Rover given up for the duration?
40 Enitewok is a what?
41 The layer of stone under railroad tracks is called a what?
42 34 Horizontal's pal is what?
44 What's something male you never see at Vassar?
45 The Salton's a what?
46 A long light hoss-drawn vehicle's called a char-à-what?
47 Sere is the anagram for what?
48 Name the father of a Civil War general (2 names)

VERTICAL

1 Betty Grable was named by the infantry Miss Footwhat of 1944?
2 What isn't exactly a Bowles of Cherries for Chester?
3 Who visited the land of the Houyhnhnms?
4 Exists
5 The batrachians are whats?
6 When you think of Quinx you think of whats?
7 Name a magazine devoted entirely to the New Yorker's entertainment?
8 If you add nothing to it, what message is it?
9 Speech is thinking what?
10 The S.S. Lafayette was formerly the what?
11 The Island of Harris is known for its whats?
16 What beverage was it formerly considered unladylike for a dame to drink?
17 What dries while you're looking for the blotter?
19 What British cabinet member is said to be badly overworked?
20 Euclid is known for the what asinorum?
22 A B-24 is called a what?
23 "——thou art, to ——returnest, was not spoken of the soul."—Longfellow
25 The raspberry is also known as the what?
28 What is popularly considered made of green cheese?
29 Woolwich, England, is the site of a famed Royal what?
30 Name a great Roman poet
31 Chinese and Kelly are common to what game?
32 The bathtub may yet revert to the making of what?
33 Of whose nomination did Webster say bitterly that a man had to be careful or he might be named President?
35 Who said "Nothing succeeds like excess"?
36 Cain fled to where for refuge?
38 In the old tearjerk song, My Mother's Rosary, what were the beads (on baby)?
39 What's slang for a buck?
41 "Where the —— sucks, there suck I"—Shakespeare
43 What is the square root of 1?
45 What's quiet about Shane?
46 Preposition

L	E	B	E	N	S	R	A	U	M		S	W	A	T
I	C	O	N		W	O	R	S	E		H	O	N	E
S	H	O	T		I	D	E	A	L		R	E	T	E
T	O	K	E	N	S		A	G	O	N	I	S	E	S
			R	I	S	K		E	D	E	N			
Q	U	E	S	T		I	T		Y	O	K	E	L	S
U	D	R		S	A	T	Y	R		N	E	M	E	L
A	D	A	M		T	E	P	I	D		R	E	Y	E
R	E	S	E	T		S	E	A	R	S		R	E	D
T	R	E	M	O	R		S	T		A	S	S	E	S
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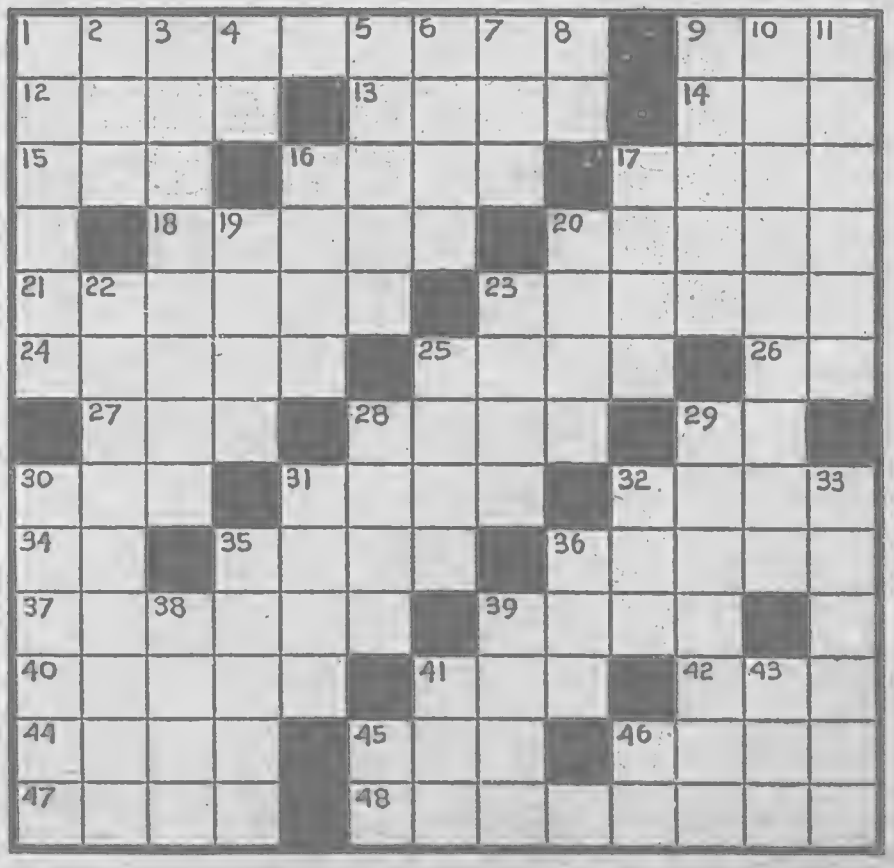
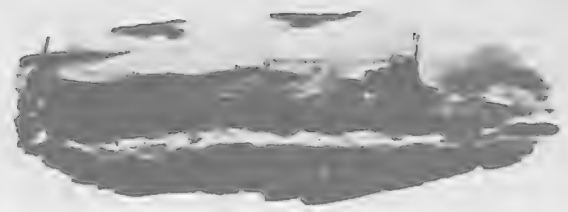
S	P	A	R	T	A	N	S		A	L	I	C	E	S
T	O	G	A		S	A	T	I	N		D	A	M	E
E	L	A	N		T	R	Y	S	T		E	R	I	N
W	E	R	E		S	E	X	T	U	P	L	E	T	S

Last week's answer



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

Sound of the Future



"Here she comes! Gosh!"—"Bet she's hitting 120!"—"Talk about your streamlined horsepower! Wow!"

Young America lined the tracks the summer of 1934 when the Zephyr made its streaking, record-breaking run from Denver to Chicago.

But years before this Diesel-engined train ushered in a new kind of railroading, General Motors men were working out the problems of this new motive power — compactness, limitations of size and weight, a new cylinder block, double the horsepower per cylinder.

A new Diesel engine came into being that powers trains of many railroads all over the United States — with an over-all economy never before equaled. But there was never any idea of stopping, even with this power problem solved.

In fact, every day for many years—up to and including today — General Motors men have been on a non-stop schedule of developing the Diesel engine.

And when a mechanized war broke over us, a clamor for this compact economical power plant arose from those who saw its tremendous possibilities.

Today, some of those same eleven-year-olds of 1934 who cheered the Diesel-powered Zephyr now listen to the smooth rush of thousands of horsepower in Diesel-powered submarines. Cruising in enemy waters close enough for a periscope view of Fujiyama, or chuffing home with a new broom of triumph lashed to the masthead — the Diesels are coming through in a big way in the "hush-hush" service, as well as in tanks, landing barges and all types of naval equipment.

One of the reasons they were ready to come through was that in normal peacetime work General Motors men, seeking to provide more and better things for more people, had built up a backlog of experience in their production.

America is rich in such experience because here men have always received just rewards for undertaking new things.

That is the idea that gave us the bountiful life we knew in prewar America. It has proved mighty useful in war. The same idea will keep on providing more and better things for more people in peace.

Every Sunday Afternoon
GENERAL MOTORS SYMPHONY OF THE AIR—NBC Network

GENERAL MOTORS

"VICTORY IS OUR BUSINESS"
CHEVROLET • PONTIAC • OLDSMOBILE • BUICK
CADILLAC • BODY BY FISHER • FRIGIDAIRE
GMC TRUCK AND COACH

I'm through. I've got nothing against you, Eb, but I should have had more sense. You're what you are."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, you came into town and put on a fraudulent show. You used to deal cards in an oil-town gambling house, one of the toughest of them all. But I'm not blaming you. I'm not blaming any one but myself."

"Somebody's been doing a lot of talking," Eb said.

"Now don't take it that way, son. I should have learned my lesson three years back when I got caught good in the panic. It's true there's been a lot of talking, and people have marked me down for a softheaded speculator. I'm sorry, Eb, but I'm pulling out of it. I'm through. No hard feelings?"

EB shook his head. He did not trust himself to speak. He put on his hat and walked out of the Othello State Bank to the street, and across to the Athens Café. He went to a stool at the far end and sat down, staring at the dishes on a shelf. Pops tapped his arm. "Perfesser, what you doin' here? You seeck, perfesser?"

Eb raised his eyes. "Pops, I feel bad. I owe you two weeks' board and I can't pay it. We're done drilling."

"No oil, perfesser?"

"No nothing."

"Stasie," Pops called. "Come out, pliz."

In a moment the girl was at Eb's side. "What's wrong, Eb?"

"He don't feel good," Pops said. "He feenish drilling. We got no oil. Here, perfesser, drink some hot coffee."

Another voice broke in, Joe Carter's: "Did I hear you say the well is played out, professor?"

Eb nodded, said slowly, "J. G. just told me. He's put in all the money he's going to, and we're going to pull the casing for salvage."

"Lot of money, was it?"

Eb looked at Joe but did not reply. Stasie whispered, "In the kitchen. Come back in the kitchen, Eb."

She sat him at a table in the kitchen and put a bottle in front of him. It was good whisky. Pops joined them and poured a little in three glasses.

"Drink it, Eb," Stasie said. "You feel better."

In the restaurant some one was rapping on the counter. Eb heard the buzz of voices and Joe Carter saying, ". . . an unholy amount of money in it." That was the only phrase he caught. He picked up his glass and drained it.

"Good," Pops said, and poured another, then hurried back to the counter.

"Eb, you work too hard," Stasie said. "Now you sit there and we drink and talk. To talk will do you good."

Eb warmed his throat with whisky and talked. He told of dressing tools at Spindletop. He talked of the Glen Pool and how he'd have had a good lease if he'd had the money, if a man from the Old Territory Oil Company hadn't outbid him. He was an oil man, he said, and he had an oil man's intuition, and he was sure the Cherokee sand was there below and the rock full of oil.

"Eb, do not be discourage'," Stasie said. "Do not give up. Oil? Who cares? But to be discourage' is no good!"

He looked at her. Facing him across the table, her thin body was poised, her dark eyes luminous. "Oil is not so important," she said in a low tone. "To finish what you start is different. Eb, you must not be discourage'. Go on. You will find some way to do it."

He gazed at her and slapped his palm on the table. "I'm going up there and see J. G.," he said. "I'm going to give it another try. Thanks, Stasie."

He went unsteadily to the livery stable, where he asked for his mare. Joe Carter approached. "Professor, I've been meaning to speak to you about your bill."

"I'll take care of it, Joe. Give me time."

"So the bank wouldn't put up any more money?" Joe shook his head. "I guess it's pretty hard on J. G., after all the trouble he had back in 1907."

Eb went to the sorrel as a groom led her forward. When he was in the buggy Joe Carter looked at him suspiciously. "You ain't figuring on leaving town?"

Eb flicked the reins on the sorrel's back and the mare bounded away.

AT the yellow house on the hill he paused and rubbed the back of his hand across his forehead before going up the steps. A voice called softly, "Is that you, Eb?"

He saw Missy sitting on the porch and went toward her. "I came to see J. G., Missy."

She got up from her chair. "It's no use, Eb. I talked to him."

He looked at the oval of her face in the dim light. "Missy, we can't stop now. I know we'll strike the pay, if we just go down a little further."

"You'll never convince pop, Eb. I tried to talk to him, but he shut up like a clam."

"Well, thanks for trying, Missy. You always brought me luck, and I sure need it now."

He leaned back against the balustrade. Again he had that empty, sick sensation, but he tried to overcome it with words. "I ain't licked yet. I'll head for Tulsa in the morning. I'm going to bring in that well. Yes, sir, I'm going to Tulsa if I have to ride the rods."

"Oh," Missy said, and hesitated an instant. "Eb, if it's money—I mean, if it's a hundred dollars or so—well, I— Let me lend you some, Eb."

Her face was near his in the starlight. He put one hand on her shoulder. "I couldn't borrow off you, honey, but I sure appreciate it." Her shoulder remained firm under his hand. She had not drawn back, and suddenly his heart began pounding. His hand slipped from her shoulder and his arm drew her close. Her chin was raised and he kissed her lips. They were warm and firm.

Then her hands were against his chest, pushing. She turned her head and his lips slid along her warm cheek. She said "Stop it!" breathlessly, and "Eb, you've been drinking."

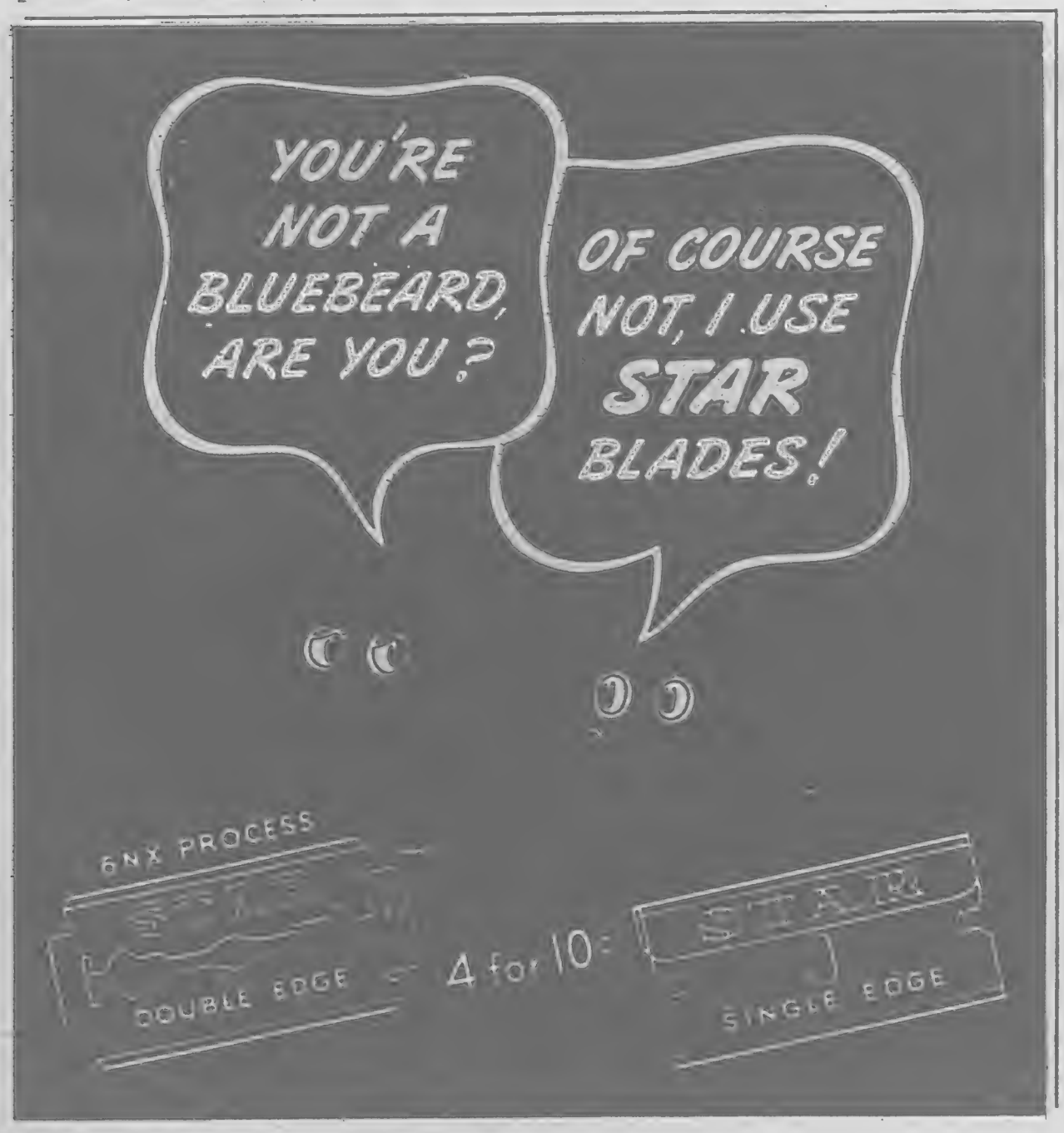
He dropped his arms. "Honey, I'm not drunk."

"Go away," Missy said. "Please go away."

"Missy, let me tell you something. Honey, I—"

"No," Missy said. She turned quickly and ran to the door. He saw her face, white and frightened, only briefly, then the door swung to.

Eb breathed deeply. He struck his fist against his palm. All his confidence had returned. He had a downhill pull and the world by the tail. He'd get the money and he'd drill his well, and when he struck oil he'd have that woman to be his woman!



When Eb awakened in his cramped room, he no longer felt inspired. The prospect now was dismal indeed. He could go to Tulsa and urge his case. Twelve hundred feet of hole and water bubbling out of the pipe. A sandstone formation. No cap rock yet. Just another screw or maybe fifty feet of hole would tell the story. Who would gamble fifteen hundred dollars to drill fifty feet of hole?

He thought of Missy. Yes, he had been drunk last night. What did she think today? But she had let him kiss her and she had kissed him back.

Suddenly he sat upright, aware that all the pounding was not in his temples. He jumped out of bed and went to the window. Across the street, in front of the Othello State Bank, he saw a crowd of men, a double line that stretched from the bank out into the street. The sound of voices came strongly to him.

Eb hurriedly dressed. Downstairs he found Pops Anapopolis standing in front of the restaurant, gazing across the street at the bank.

Eb said, "What's wrong, Pops?"

"I dunno. Somebody say the bank put fifty-sixty t'ousand dolla in that oil well and she's a dry hole."

"That ain't true," Eb said. "It was less than five thousand, and it was J. G.'s money."

"He make a speech," Pops said. "Nobody leesten. Everybody want his money quick."

EB crossed the street, went to the side entrance of the bank and knocked. He waited a while, and knocked again. At last J. G. opened the door.

"J. G., what's this?" Eb said.

"Come in, come in." J. G. held the door open, and closed and locked it the moment Eb was inside.

"I heard it was because of the well," Eb said.

"That's right."

"But, look here. Why don't you tell 'em it wasn't the bank's money?"

"I did tell 'em," J. G. said stiffly.

"Well, look here. Why don't I go out and make a speech? I'll tell them the facts. I'll show them the figures."

"Eb, your word ain't so good in this town," J. G. said, avoiding his eyes. "But thank you."

"I know it ain't." Eb put his hand on the banker's shoulder. "What are you going to do?"

"Pay as long as I can. What else can I do?"

"But, J. G., ain't the bank all right?"

"Sure it is. Our investments are sound, but it's cash we need. I'm trying to get hold of some currency and a man from the Commission is coming up from Guthrie to look at my assets."

"That takes time," Eb said.

"Yes, it takes time, and time is our one liability. Maybe if we can hold out today we'll be all right."

Hearing a quick light rapping on the door, J. G. opened it. Missy came in. She barely looked at Eb, but he saw color come to her cheeks. She said, "Pop, what are you going to *do*?"

"Just hold out as long as we can, honey. Don't you worry about it. Excuse me, I got to go inside."

He was gone and Missy and Eb were alone together in the office. She kept her face averted, and at last Eb said, "I heard a story once. Run on a bank and the president served tea and sandwiches to everybody on the line. Got 'em laughing and the run stopped."

She gave him a quick glance. "It's worth a try."

(*Continued on page 51*)

FALSE TEETH WEARERS

How *YOU* can Avoid The Danger of DENTURE BREATH

AT 5:30, do you get an ear to kiss instead of lips? Maybe it's...Denture Breath. You may not know your breath offends, but others do. Be careful. Don't brush your dentures with ordinary cleansers . . . it's difficult to reach all the tiny crevices—and besides you are apt to scratch your plate. These scratches cause food particles and film to collect faster and cling tighter, causing offensive Denture Breath.

What's more . . . your plate material is *60 times softer than natural teeth*, and brushing with ordinary tooth pastes, tooth powders or soaps, often wears down the delicate fitting ridges designed to hold your plate in place. With worn-down ridges, of course, your plate loosens. But, since there is no need for brushing when using Polident—there's no danger. And besides, the *safe* Polident way is so easy and sure.

Later—Friend Husband is now one of the delighted millions who have found Polident the new, easy way to keep dental plates and bridges sweet and clean. If *you* wear a removable bridge, a partial or complete dental plate, play safe and use Polident every day. Used this way, Polident helps maintain the original natural appearance of your dental plate for less than 1¢ a day. Get Polident at any drug counter, 30¢ and 60¢ sizes.

FOOD Fights for FREEDOM produce and conserve—share and play square!

Use POLIDENT Daily TO KEEP PLATES AND BRIDGES CLEAN . . . AND ODOR-FREE!

WHEN THE COMMAND IS "STACK ARMS!"

WHEN THE DIN of battle has subsided and a calm has settled down over the world—will this be the calm that precedes another storm . . .

The storm that has so often followed other wars and which has brought despair to the hearts of men, and hunger to their stomachs?

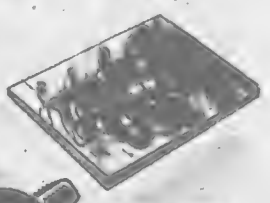
Will the apple stand symbolize again, the richness of America's opportunities . . . ?

The answer to these questions depends upon how well Industry, Labor and the people of America unite in protecting the stimulating influences of Free Enterprise, Free Competition and Private Initiative. Upon these depend the speed with which Peacetime production can begin . . . whether industry and business can absorb millions of men who have "stacked arms."

Today Detroit Tap & Tool Company accuracy is helping clients build war equipment which, for efficiency, is amazing the enemy. Tomorrow it will help these same clients build products of Peace whose efficiency will astound the world... and whose manufacture will create jobs for all.

LET'S ALL KEEP BACKING THE ATTACK—*Buy More Bonds*

Send for your free copy of "Threads of Destiny," a new booklet tracing the development of the machine screw thread. Please make your request on your company letterhead.



DETROIT

TAP & TOOL CO.

8432 BUTLER AVENUE • DETROIT, MICHIGAN

GROUND TAPS • GROUND THREAD HOBS • THREAD GAGES • SPECIAL THREADING TOOLS AND GAGES

(*Continued from page 49*)

She went to the wall box and rang for the operator. "Julie, this is Missy Watson. Will you ring my house?" She waited for the connection, then said, "Nicey, I want you to get busy. Make a couple of hundred sandwiches. Yes, a couple of *hundred*. Call Neville's grocery and ask them to rush the stuff out and you let me know when it's ready. I'll make tea here."

She looked at Eb and he said, "I'll go fetch it."

Eb carried back five pounds of tea from the grocer and in the meantime Missy had set a huge pot boiling on the base burner in J. G.'s office. She had tin cups sent over from the Simmons hardware store, and when she called Sam Neville he agreed to send the sandwiches around in his delivery wagon.

The bank resounded with loud voices and the sliding of feet as the line moved in and out of the door. J. G. was helping in a teller's cage. He was trying to remain jovial, but the lines of strain were deep in his cheeks. Beside him Albert was working smoothly, counting out money, sliding it under the grille.

"LET'S get busy," Eb said. "I'll help you pass the stuff out."

"Thank you," Missy said, without looking at him. "Nicey and I will take care of it."

They went through into the bank, Missy with a plate heaped high with sandwiches, and Nicey carrying a bucket of tea and a market basket filled with tin cups.

In half an hour the sandwiches were gone. Missy returned, her hair in disarray, her face flushed. She dropped hopelessly into her father's swivel chair. "It's just no use at all. They thank you and they take the sandwiches and stay in line and never even smile."

She got to her feet, walked quickly to the window, returned to the desk. She said, "Eb, it's unkind, but nothing has been right since you came to town. You know you're the cause of it."

Eb shook his head. "No, I ain't. It was talk done it, and somebody started that talk. I got an idea who it was."

She shook her head. "That's nonsense. He wouldn't do it."

Eb grinned. "So you're thinking the same thing."

"He wouldn't do it deliberately," Missy said. Suddenly her eyes burned angrily. "Why don't you just go away? You shouldn't be seen here at the bank anyway. That makes it worse." She had worked up a perverse anger.

Eb stood up and put on his hat. "Well, believe what you want about who you want, Miss Watson, if you can arrange the facts to suit your pattern. Goodby."

Eb slammed the door after him and strode away. The crowd was pressed in a closer jam at the bank entrance.

In the Palace Hotel the clerk called to him, "Your room's locked, professor."

"Then let's have the key."

"Sorry. We'll have to keep it locked until your bill is paid."

Eb looked at the clerk, chuckled, and returned to the boardwalk. At the livery stable it was the same.

Eb was not hungry, but he decided to go to the Athens Café. It was one last test to make. Pops was still standing on the boardwalk, but he followed Eb inside. "Just a cup of coffee and a sandwich," Eb said.

"All right. Ham? Cheese?"

"Ham," Eb said, with a happy grin.

Eb sat all afternoon in the Athens Café, watching. As twilight came there was still a crowd at the bank. At seven o'clock he walked resolutely across the street. He pounded on the side door until it was opened by Missy.

He pushed his way inside. "I want to talk to J. G."

Her eyes were dull and her face showed the strain. Eb reached out quickly, put his hands on her shoulders, and shook her. "Listen to me," he said angrily. "It's time for you to get some sense. You blame me because you're scared of me. That's all it is."

"I'm not!"

"Now you do like I tell you. You go and tell J. G. I want to see him."

She stared at him, her face pale, the pupils of her hazel eyes big in a sort of fascination. Then she went into the bank. J. G. returned with her.

"Listen here, J. G.," Eb said. "You can't just sit back and let 'em ruin you. You've got to do something."

"Do something?" J. G. said hopelessly. "What?"

"J. G., you willing to let me handle this?"

"I don't know what *you* could do, Eb."

"I'm pretty good at getting out of holes. You know that. Now just let me

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get you out of this one. Let me have Albert a minute, and get me some money sacks."

"What's the idea?"

"Just do as I say."

J. G. turned his head. "Missy?"

"All right, pop." She left the room.

She returned with Albert, carrying some white sacks. He stared at Eb. "What's *he* doing here?"

"Now this is the idea," Eb said. "Albert and me will slip out that side door, and after a while he'll come driving up. When you see him coming, J. G., you start a speech. Tell 'em that everybody will be paid off, but you're going to close up for the night."

"What is this?" Albert asked. "It doesn't sound right to me. It's some kind of trick."

"Of course it's a trick," Eb said.

"J. G., haven't we had enough of this fellow?" Albert said. "I've heard enough of his talk."

EB stepped forward. His hand flew out and his open palm slapped Albert's cheek a stinging blow.

"It's your loose talk that's caused this trouble," Eb said. "Don't think we don't know it." He doubled up his fists and started for Albert. Missy screamed.

"Eb, stop it!" J. G. said.

Eb was breathing heavily. "You going to do as you're told?"

Albert's voice was unsteady. "J. G., you going to let him get away with that?"

J. G. looked hard at Eb, then said quietly, "Albert, maybe the best thing is for you to co-operate."

"Right," Eb said. "Now you come with me."

He opened the side door. "It will only take five minutes. Albert, where's your auto?"

Albert did not meet Eb's eyes. "Down the street."

"We'll take it," Eb said.

He cranked the Brush and sat beside Albert, giving directions. They drove behind the stores and came out on Main Street two blocks above the bank. Albert sat silent, and Eb said savagely, "What's the matter with you? You want to get the bank out of this or don't you?"

Albert cleared his throat. "Of course I do."

"Stop right here."

Albert braked in front of the hardware store and Eb picked up the money sacks. He went in and bought up all the washers in a tray. Bill Simmons was astonished.

"Never mind what I want them for," Eb said. "And never mind passing it out what I bought and how much." He began filling the sacks with washers. "I mean that."

"Why, sure," Bill Simmons said. "Sure," and recoiled from Eb's savage glance.

Eb filled six sacks and tied the mouths. They bulged in hard lumps from the washers, and clanked when he threw them down on the floor of the runabout.

"I'll be right behind you," he said to Albert. "Now this is what you do. You drive up to the bank and call to the constable to give you a hand. Let him carry them money sacks inside and be sure that everybody sees 'em."

Albert nodded.

"And take the muffler off and give 'em plenty of noise," Eb said. "Get going as soon as you see J. G. start his speech."

Eb ran lightly along the boardwalk to the outer fringe of the crowd, and stepped against the building wall, where he would not be seen. He saw J. G. climb to the sandstone stoop and raise his hand.

"Listen to me a minute, neighbors," he shouted. The noise subsided, and Eb heard the sudden roar of the Brush. "Twelve hours is plenty long enough for a banking day," J. G. shouted. "We opened up at eight o'clock this morning and we've stayed open until we're ready to drop so we could accommodate everybody. Now we're going to close up for the night."

Angry howls drowned out the noise of the approaching car. "No, sir!" they shouted. "Give us our money!"

The Brush nosed through the crowd with a frightful roar and stopped near the sandstone arch. No one looked at Albert; they were all watching J. G.

"Friends," J. G. shouted above the noise, "you know me. I've been banker here ever since there was a town of Othello, and I'll tell you this: Every cent I own to my name is behind this here bank and I'll throw it in the hopper if I have to. We'll open up again in the morning, same as usual, and we'll pay off one hundred cents on the dollar to anybody that wants his money. Friends, I pledge myself!" He turned and shouted, "Is that you, Albert?"

"Yes, sir." Albert stood up in the runabout. "Constable, can you give me a hand with these money sacks?"

There was silence, and all eyes were watching Albert. The constable said loudly, "Sure I will. Stand back, men."

Albert began passing down the bulky sacks.

"That's all for tonight," J. G. said. "Come back in the morning if you want your money. We've got plenty."

This was the moment. Eb looked around him at the crowd. The faces were tense. Deep in the shadow he cupped his hands and shouted, "Sure thing, J. G."

The constable went through the arch with white sacks heaped in his arms. Eb shouted again, "It's all right with me, J. G.," and another voice took it up, "Sure it is."

"We all been damn fools," Eb shouted. "J. G., I'm leaving my money lay."

Eb said to the man next him, "The bank's all right. Fools like us are the cause of it."

"I guess you're right," the man said.

The crowd was dispersing gradually. Many thronged to the Athens Café. The change in their attitude was apparent. Eb grinned and went to the side door of the bank.

J. G. let him in. "By glory, Eb, I believe we put it over!"

"You bet we did," Eb said.

"Only tomorrow will tell." J. G. sighed. "But I feel better about it. I sure do." He put his arm around Eb's shoulders. "You scalawag, I believe you've saved my neck."

Missy sat exhausted in a chair, her eyes nearly closed. She said softly, "It seems we have a lot to learn from the professor, doesn't it?"

"I've got my uses," Eb said tightly.

She opened her eyes full and they were a golden color in the lamplight. "Eb, we love you for it. We're grateful."

"We are," J. G. said. "And listen here. If it *does* work out, we're going on with that well. Eb, we'll drill that hole!"

LOCKED out of the Palace Hotel, Eb slept that night on the kitchen table of the Athens Café. Stasie shook him the next morning, her warm laughter bubbling.

"You sleep so good, professor!"

Eb sat up. "What time?"

"Six thirty. I fix you some coffee."

He was eating toast and coffee at the table when Pops arrived.

"Is a crowd at the bank, professor. Look like they open up early."

Eb dropped his spoon in his cup and jumped to his feet. Through the plate glass he saw a line in front of the bank, and his mouth clamped shut. He walked across the street, knocked on the side door. J. G. opened it, smiling.

"Get that casing, Eb, and let's drill us an oil well."

"But what about that crowd?" Eb asked.

"They're here to *deposit* their money, son, not to take it out. Eb, what I said last night goes. You can drill a hole to China, if you want."

Eb grinned and said, "I'll telegraph for casing and I'll get a crew lined up. By the end of the week we'll be making hole again, J. G."

"If you've got time this evening, Missy told me to ask you up to the house for supper."

"I'll be there," Eb said. "Use your phone?"

He went to the wall box and called up the depot to send a telegram. As he

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

(Unabashed)

EYEDEAS: What a good-looking blonde gives you.

MA'AM-MOTH: One of those great big ones in mama's clothes closet.

SQUATRON: A division of U. S. Army men sitting on the heels of Berlin.

EX-SPECTRE-ATE: To drool at a ghoul.

PIGNACIOUS: A hog that hauls off and socks you one.

HUEMAN: A man who paints.

PRAYRIE: Church on the plains.

ONTARRYO: A Canadian province where it's nice to linger.

PUNKTILIOUS: A drip who's always on time.

MORSHT: Second helping of beet soup.

hung up the receiver, J. G. said, "I was talking to Missy last night, Eb, and—well, how are you fixed for cash?"

"Not so good, J. G."

"Well, how about a hundred?"

"Perfect," Eb said.

With the money in his pocket he hurried to the Athens Café.

Eb said, "I got the money here for my back board, Pops."

"No, no," Pops said. "Say nothing."

Eb counted out the money. Stasie, watching, shook back her black hair and said, "It is not money we think of, Eb. You're our good friend. We are happy for you, and we are happy you eat with us at the Athens."

Eb walked to the stable, thinking that loyalty was what a man wanted in a woman. Stasie was a real woman. She was just about perfect, and a good cook, too!

He had the sorrel mare hitched to his buggy as he paid his charges at the livery stable, and drove out to the Pitt farm. He found Eddie chopping wood.

"Nice form you got with an ax," he said. "Eddie, let's see what you can do with a sledge hammer. We're going up and dress a six-inch bit and have it ready. The casing will come along in a day or so."

"Then it ain't true, professor, what they said?"

"You bet it ain't. Hop in."

They heated the bit glowing red in the forge and hammered it to shape with the sixteen-pound sledges, then they drained the boiler and cleaned it, overhauled the engine. By the time they had finished the sun was setting. Eb drove back to town, bathed at the barbershop, and continued to the yellow house on the hill.

MISSY received him shyly. They stood on the porch, near a trellis of honeysuckle, and Eb recalled the sweet smell of her hair the night he had kissed her here. She was saying gently, "Eb, I guess I was pretty near hysterics yesterday. I was so upset."

"You had reason to be," Eb said.

"I mean I said things I really didn't mean. I'm sorry, Eb."

It was sweetly said, but Eb detected a dutiful note. His muscles slacked and he said tonelessly, "It's over the dam, Missy. We're starting over now. Right from scratch, except we've got us twelve hundred feet of hole already and we're right near the pay."

"Oh, oil!" Missy said. "Eb, you've got oil in your veins."

After dinner they sat in the parlor with J. G., and Missy said, "Eb, if you should strike oil, what are you going to do?"

"First, drill an offset."

J. G. chuckled, and Missy said, "I mean for yourself."

"I have no particular wants." Eb reflected. "My father used to say a man could be happy living in a wooden box if he set himself to enjoy that kind of life."

"Unusual kind of oil man, your father," J. G. said.

"Well, he was a teacher," Eb explained. "He taught high school down near Austin, Texas, but when Spindletop blew in, he took me up there to try and cash in. He was never much of an oil man, but he made one of me."

Missy shook her head. "Eb, you turn up a new facet every day, but I must say I worry about what's coming next."

"Well, I've never been to the penitentiary," Eb said.

J. G. laughed, but Missy's face was pink. She talked little thereafter, and when Eb rose to leave he was unable to see her alone. As he drove to town, Eb thought that he had been right. She was the kind of woman who deliberately tried to tantalize a man.

The casing came, twelve hundred feet of twenty-foot pipe, and Eb hired a crew to run it. When all the pipe had been jointed and lowered to the bottom of the hole, they sent down ten sacks of quick-drying cement and knocked off work to allow it to harden.

Eb said to Eddie Pitt, "Might as well take advantage of this lay-off. Let's set up that control head. We may be only a screw from the Cherokee sand. Once we hit oil, we don't want to waste it."

They screwed the control head in place on the inner string of casing and ran a short flow line to the slush pit. With the valve opened, the tools passed freely through the cylinder of the control head into the casing and down to the bottom of the hole. The next day they drilled through the cement plug.

Missy came out to the rig that day and Eb showed her the latest cuttings.

"Is it the impervious cap you were talking about?" she asked.

"Yes. It can't be far to the Cherokee shallow sand, if it's there."

"*If* it's there? I thought you were sure of that."

"It could have lensed out. We've got no guaranty, and if it *is* there we've got no guaranty there's oil in it. But I'm sure that we got us a structure."

For a time he watched her, and at last he said, "You asked me the other night what I was going to do if we struck oil."

Eb hesitated. He had trouble keeping his voice casual. "If we do, Missy, I'm going to have something to say to you."

She gave him a quick, almost frightened glance, bit her full lower lip, and said, "No, don't say it, Eb."

His dark eyes were bright. "You still holding Professor Pyro against me?"

She lowered her eyes. "I think Professor Pyro is still there, Eb."

"Now listen here. Why can't we get that cleared up? Oh, sure I've made some mistakes, but I was on my own after my father was killed at Spindletop."

She raised her eyes, and he said, "Gusher came in. Couple of drops on the boiler. Whoosh!" He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, I was fifteen years old, and I had to make a living. I learned how, but I never did anything dishonest in my life."

"Professor Pyro isn't exactly honest."

"Oh, that! Putting something over on somebody ain't dishonest. If it is, it was dishonest to hoodwink the depositors at the bank, but I haven't heard you criticizing that. What a man is deep inside he don't know and I guess he better not worry too much about it. And if he can skin somebody out of something, why shouldn't he?"

"That's Professor Pyro talking," Missy said, and stood up. "Eb, you'll never get rid of him."

"That's me talking," Eb said. "And you ain't ever going to get rid of me, Missy."

"Oh, now, really!" Missy said stiffly. She stepped from the derrick floor while Eb was letting out the temper screw. He turned and saw her hurrying to her buggy, and stood watching her drive away.

Eb wins in more ways than one, as you will find in next week's installment, though Albert Neville shows initiative that surprises everybody.

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DAYBREAK FOR OUR CARRIER

Continued from Page 27

flight deck. He wasted no time. "Right this way, my stinkeroo. Right this way."

Carrier planes are not constructed with space to spare. Willie easily could have dodged taking along an added weight.

"Where do you want to ride? The 'greenhouse,' I suppose."

"Yep, the 'greenhouse,' if you don't mind. And remember, now, you're just the chauffeur."

"We'll see about that later. Do you need a pillow?"

"Sure I do. You know that."

The "greenhouse" really does need a pillow, for it has no seat in it. It has instead a sort of imaginative cubicle surrounded by layers of instruments. Wedging himself in among them, a man needs whatever padding can be obtained to take the place of a safety belt which is lacking. But the "greenhouse," being on the topside and directly behind the pilot, is really the preferable place if one wants a broad look at everything.

We had to hurry. The flight officers already were at work for the take-offs. The green "go" signal was lighted on the bridge. Then came our turn to be signaled up to the take-off spot. We were there, and we weren't. It seemed all one movement. Willie, after revving his motor, gave the customary nod that all was O. K. The take-off signal officer snapped down his little flag, then ducked under our starboard wing as we passed over.

The "greenhouse" contained a set of earphones especially plugged in by Willie for his cargo. One could listen in on the interplane conversations. We circled while joining up with the rest of our squadron. There came Jake and Joe and Denny and the rest of them. They made faces at us while coming by. Then our carrier's special markings faded from our view.

The bomb load in our own plane consisted of four 500-pounders. The plan was for the squadron to fly low until coming within sight of the target, then soar for altitude, take the measurement, peel off at the given intervals, and come down with all we had. Each plane had its own assigned target within the main target.

What makes these young carrier pilots so splendid, and why it's a privilege when they let one go with them, is that their fears can be the same as your fears. When in a tight spot you know what they are thinking because you yourself are thinking the same. But they know how to come out of it, if such is possible, and you do not.

And the next day, or even the next hour, they deliberately will go right up to get afraid all over again.

"See it?" This was Willie's voice coming through the earphones. "See it?"

So there it was, the enemy's shore, a hairline in the blue haze.

A BIG carrier task force engagement comprises too many overlapping segments for any individual to see the entirety of what is taking place. This can even be true of the flagship of the force. The title "commander of a carrier task force" may sound like a neat title to have, and it *is* a neat title to have. But it also is a neater title to be

able to hold down time and again while producing results and not catastrophe. And one wholesale catastrophe is all that is needed.

The task force commander's field of operation is virtually limitless. It extends from the time he leaves his base, and it continues until he is back to it again. And his units are such that they fly far beyond his vision in all directions from him, with radio silence the while. But they are his units just the same, and his moving flight decks have to be where these units return.

Continual days after days of this sort of thing, before, during, and even after the scheduled engagement, must be a good deal like having the responsibility over the nebulous. Our own plane was part of this nebulosity, too. But we didn't think of it that way at the time, certainly. Our plane was all we had, and our one propeller was all we had. If anything went badly wrong under fire we would land either in the ocean or on the only soil available, with several thousand enemies the only people on it. We wondered vaguely, of course, what these people would do to us in case we were knocked down on their land.

Yes, it was strange how our one small propeller could exert such a powerful influence on our lives as to be able to change them completely.

THE smoke from the antiaircraft bursting around us was what was noticeable first. The smoke penetrated inside the plane, and seemed to cling inside. We could smell it, much like the odor of burning cloth.

The sea beneath us contained circles of strange colors. They widened, and more colors appeared in them as they widened. We were looking down on the explosions of antiaircraft fire striking the sea. We could not see the water geyser up from these circles; we were at the wrong angle for that.

Either we would come out of all this or we would not. The sensation was not unlike flipping a coin—or, rather, waiting to receive the verdict on a coin which already had been flipped.

The enemy operators periodically attempted English in an effort to jam our interplane talk. One of our planes would receive an order to strafe a certain numbered target again, for instance, and the enemy operator in terrible English would say not to mind, that he was taking that target himself.

At one time, too, he ordered us all to abandon the project immediately and return to our bases.

Even before our squadron had climbed to altitude for its dive-glide, the enemy's land was recognizable by the presence on it of what could have been a series of spinning tops. These were the dark smokes of fires, of course, and our job was to create a lot more of these spinning figures if possible.

The dive-glide itself had been furious enough to allow for few other sensations beyond the mere physical one of suddenly being yanked downward at a hell of a clip. You were doubly glad of not having the responsibility of the young pilot. You could just say to yourself: "Well, it's up to him, not up to me, to stop this thing." And that was all there was about it.

You didn't have to hold on, for the pressure of the dive itself was taking care of all that for you. What seemed lacking, too, were all those sound effects tuned to our ears by so many years of motion pictures. We should have been hearing a roaring or a

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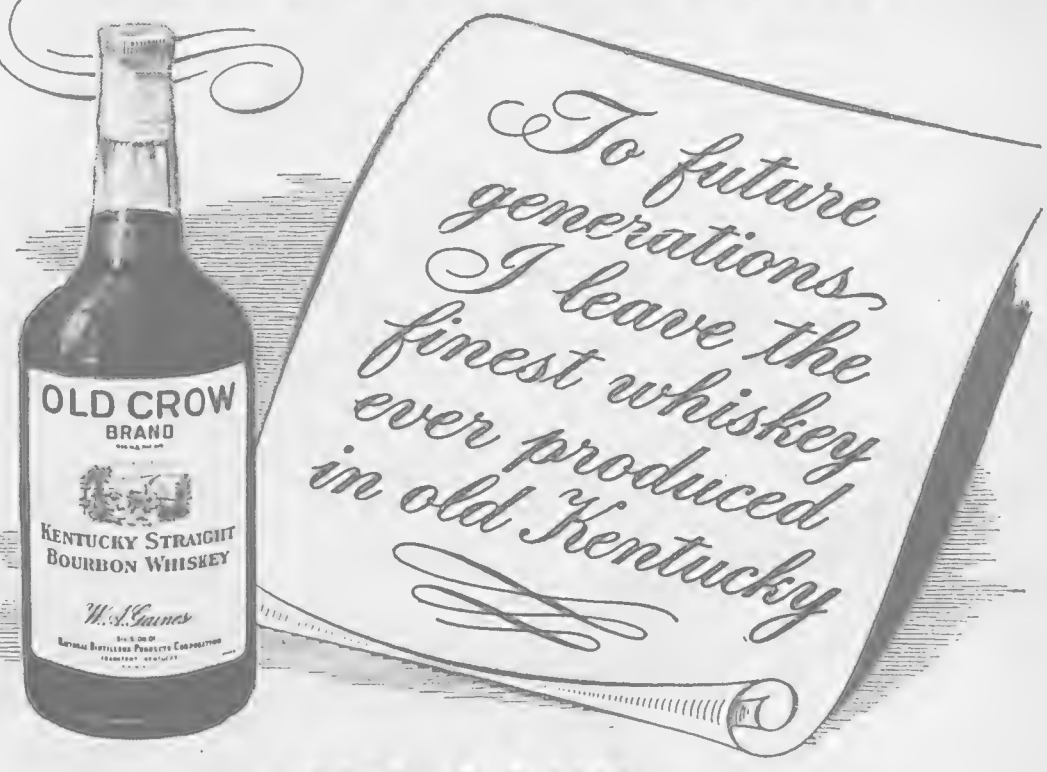
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screeching as we came down, and we should have been hearing the explosions of other bombs. But, to our own ears anyway, it all seemed rather quiet and rather lonely.

At first we had been up where the air was cold, and then we were down to where the air seemed bumpy with heat waves. But they were not heat waves. It was heat mingled with the vibrations of shells exploding around us. The plane would be whipped one direction, and then, before righting itself, it would be whipped a little more in the same direction.

Our bombs were away!

Not only did we hear these great words through our earphones, but also we felt the lightening of the plane as we straightened out.

Yes, our bombs were away and nothing could stop them now. It was a clean feeling. We had gotten our explosives off directly down upon the enemy. Our plane might be stopped, but our bombs never would be stopped.

No committee meetings could stop them. No Congressional hearings could stop them. No walkouts. No questionnaires-to-be-filled-out could stop them. No medical examinations. No bickering in front offices and no bickering in back offices. We didn't need anybody's influence through anybody else's influence to get those bombs to where they were going.

And some of this same feeling, perhaps, is what makes officers and men at sea happier, in a strange sort of way, than officers and men ashore. We were delivering, and *had* delivered, and now it was up to us if possible to get out of there.

SOME enemy planes had been reported in the air. And now, recovering from our drop and having released our load, we were in a better position to look around.

Our fuel supply would not last forever, of course, and Willie had his own time limit to follow. He was wearing a new waterproof wrist watch. The previous night he had pointed to it and had said: "Haven't had a chance to test it in water yet. Maybe I'll test it tomorrow."

We glanced around for other members of our squadron, and one of them came alongside us. He pointed aft toward his rudder. Some of the rudder was there, and some was not. He indicated he would like to ride wing with us. Willie nodded.

Though the day was so clear we could see great distances, nothing was clearly defined. We were traveling around and around too fast. Our own planes were diving and maneuvering at all levels. We could look up and see them, and we could look down and see them. The ocean sometimes would be up on its side alongside of us like a wall, or again would slide away from us completely.

The bigger target itself seemed detached from us, in a way. Changes were occurring on the face of it, but these changes seemed almost as if they were not of our doing. We were disfiguring an opponent awfully, and yet seemingly without hitting him at all.

The strafing of the enemy planes on the runways was excellent, we learned later. But from up in the air the burning planes appeared as scraps of yellow paper which somebody had forgotten to pick up.

The bigger fires were different. They had volume to them, and movement. These must have been the fuel tanks and the buildings. But, as with our own

dive-glide itself, what was lacking to us again was sound. It became a painting of burning buildings, and perhaps a rather poor painting.

Our job done, we joined some of our other planes heading away, and Willie said over the phone: "Well, another day, another battle."

But it hadn't seemed like that at all. It seemed as if it were now our duty, in fact, to try to decide whether or not we were dead. Or aren't people supposed to do that in the middle of a queer dream?

THE pleasure of getting back aboard —home again—will be in direct proportion to the number of other flyers who get there too. On entering a readyroom, one need not ask outright what sort of luck the squadron has had. If it has been bad the returning pilots will be talking as usual, but talking in serious groups, trying to patch mysteries together, as they wait their turns to be interviewed by the Intelligence officer.

Some pilots during their months aboard just naturally have made themselves the lifeblood of the squadron. And when such a pilot has failed to return, the loss to the other members appears triply personal. Their impulse is to go right back and do something about it.

"Did you see him go down?"

"No. That's the hell of it. None of us saw him go down. Mike over there thought he saw him get hit, but he was still flying and waved his hand. And just then Mike got hit himself and couldn't see any more because . . ."

This uncertainty is the killing thing in any readyroom. Nobody can so much as put his teeth into even a remote hope, which in itself would be something, hazy though it might be. As to those carrier pilots whose last minutes over the ocean were not seen by any one, it's the ocean alone which has the answer, and the ocean keeps the answer to itself.

We had seen one of our planes go down while still within range of the enemy, and another at quite a distance from us. We had flown to the localities. Others from our outfit were there ahead of us, circling the spots, throwing down life preservers and the like. We also did what we could, then charted the spots, and they would be our first message on returning aboard.

As we approached to segregate our own home from among the other carriers, Willie pointed with sharp little jabs to a diminutive glow aboard one carrier's flight deck. As we drew nearer, the glow grew in size.

A plane on landing had broken into flames. Some pilot, instead of being allowed to feel good about his homecoming, had been handed this surprise lump instead. The burning plane, even as we watched, was being tumbled over the side.

There is no end to the stories about odd carrier landings. One day a pilot of one of our torpedo-bombers had cut his motor and was gliding down to the flight deck exactly as he should be. But his plane took an unaccountable bump just as his wheels touched. With his switch cut off, he was bumped clear up high again and over the barrier. Had he landed over the barrier he would have landed upon the other planes parked there.

Acting on instinct, he switched his motor back on while in the middle of the bounce. What occurred at the same moment is too much to expect ever to occur again. In the midst of the bounce the motor caught. It caught instantly,

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THE HOME FRONT

"You win—I thought they could be *any* color!"

and the pilot grazed over to port and away, having cleared the parked planes and having cleared the ship.

Some of the other landings we have seen we would as soon forget; and that is how it goes aboard a carrier.

Our wheels touched, and now we were aboard. Now we would learn the best and the worst in our own ready-room.

AFTER two days and two nights of attacking, one could have told that the task force was now on its way back to our base, if through no other reason than that the scuttlebutt was starting all over again.

The scuttlebutt had to do with where we were going to attack next after we refueled and replenished our carrier.

At sea there can be no definite let-down after a job has been done. More than once, while starting the return, we had been summoned to our battle stations by the announcement that a "boogey" (enemy plane) had been sighted in our vicinity. Yet, for all of that, there cannot help but be some difference, and it is most noticeable in the staterooms of the flyers at night. The gabfest now has more of a rowdy carelessness to it.

Part of the nightly gabfest has to do with what a great time we will have when back in port. But even as we talk we know we are dealing in blarney. Somebody is going to arrange an amazing party ashore with actual girls in actual attendance. Each has her own "wheels" (meaning her own car), and each is desperately anxious to meet us, and to have her home become our home every minute we are in port.

But the base, as we know only too well, will be the same sort of base as when last we left it, except that now it will contain more military people and even fewer women than had been there before.

So, when finally we do get back in port, we know ahead of time exactly what we will be doing: we'll be working to get ready to go out again.

The pilots will fly the planes to some remote landing field. They will take off the carrier during our final dawn at sea. They will continue their practicing at the field. They will have night practice, and day practice, and target practice. And the planes will not be flown aboard again until we are out at sea once more.

We're going to Burma this next time.
We're going to Korea this next time.
We're going to Mindanao.

Daybreak for Our Carrier is soon to be published in book form by Whittlesey House. The Navy Office of Public Relations, through the Council on Books in Wartime, has made this material available. All royalties resulting from its sales are directed to Navy welfare agencies.

THE END

LIGHTER MOMENTS with fresh Eveready Batteries

"Don't worry, Darling! There's nobody around!"

THE DEPENDABLE POWER of "Eveready" No. 6 Dry Cells is being put to excellent use right now in the armed forces' field telephone units. This means that the relatively small civilian supply must be stretched as far as possible—use yours carefully!

The proper handling of America's food supply can help shorten the war and write the peace. Don't be responsible for wasting an ounce of food!

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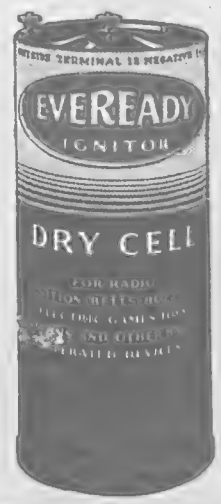

EVEREADY
TRADE MARK

WHAT AILS THE IRISH?

Continued from Page 15

that we'd like to see Britain beaten down to the nub while doing it!"

Across the Irish Sea, the embattled British think of the Irish as a stubborn, dour people whose emphasis on the past is annoying and uncalled-for in these trying days. A London woman spoke for many hundreds like her when she told me, "My son was lost at sea off the Irish coast. I'll always feel that if we had had sea and air bases in Eire for patrol and rescue he might be alive today."

I happened to return from Eire to Britain the day it became known that De Valera rejected the American demand to expel the Axis diplomats. Just to see what would happen, I presented an Irish shilling to pay for some groceries. The cashier pursed her lips and refused it. "That might have been good last week, but not today," she said emphatically. Lord Bennett, who is president of the British Merchant Navy's Comforts Funds, made the briefest and frankest comment: "The Irish make me sick."

YET the British newspapers, while deploring Ireland's attitude, were surprisingly moderate. It is quite possible that the average Briton subconsciously realizes that Ireland got a rather raw deal in the past.

To the Empire-rich British, the Irish question used to be merely a side issue always coming up at times when Britain was sorely occupied elsewhere. Before this war Britain always claimed that Ireland had free dominion status and was a member of the British Commonwealth. This Ireland hotly denied. Her sole tie with the Empire was forced on her by the reluctance of other nations to enter into the Empire controversy: Irish diplomats to foreign countries are still accredited by King George, which is a mere formality. But after the war Britain probably won't care much whether Ireland is in the Commonwealth or not. She is quite apt to wash her hands of the Irish—which will suit them fine. They have pretended to care nothing for British protection. They've discovered that the British must protect them, whether they like it or not, in order to protect themselves.

Yet Ireland has some postwar problems in the solving of which she will need British co-operation and good will. The greatest of these problems is "partition," which Eire terms the century's greatest crime. Only twenty-six Irish counties were included when Eire was formed in 1921. Britain retained the remaining six northeastern counties and formed the independent governmental unit called Northern Ireland, which includes Belfast and is largely industrial. Britain keeps this territory, first for wartime bases and secondly because the inhabitants, predominantly Scotch-descent Protestants, emphatically do not want to leave the Empire and join Eire. Eire insists the entire island should be one political unit. It may be said that in Ireland, as a man worships so he will vote. The six counties have a solid two-to-one Protestant majority. Eire wants the entire island to vote as a whole, which would give the southern Catholics a heavy majority.

Meanwhile both factions seethe with resentment. Southern Irishmen charge that the 800,000 northern Protestants persecute 430,000 northern Catholics.

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The railroads are being called upon to do the biggest transportation job in all history — twice as big as in the first World War — and still growing.

You can help do this job. Railroads must have more workers — keen, alert people to do real, responsible, vital war work.

When you take one of these jobs you will really be serving the armed forces. For the great bulk of everything the Army and Navy use moves by rail.

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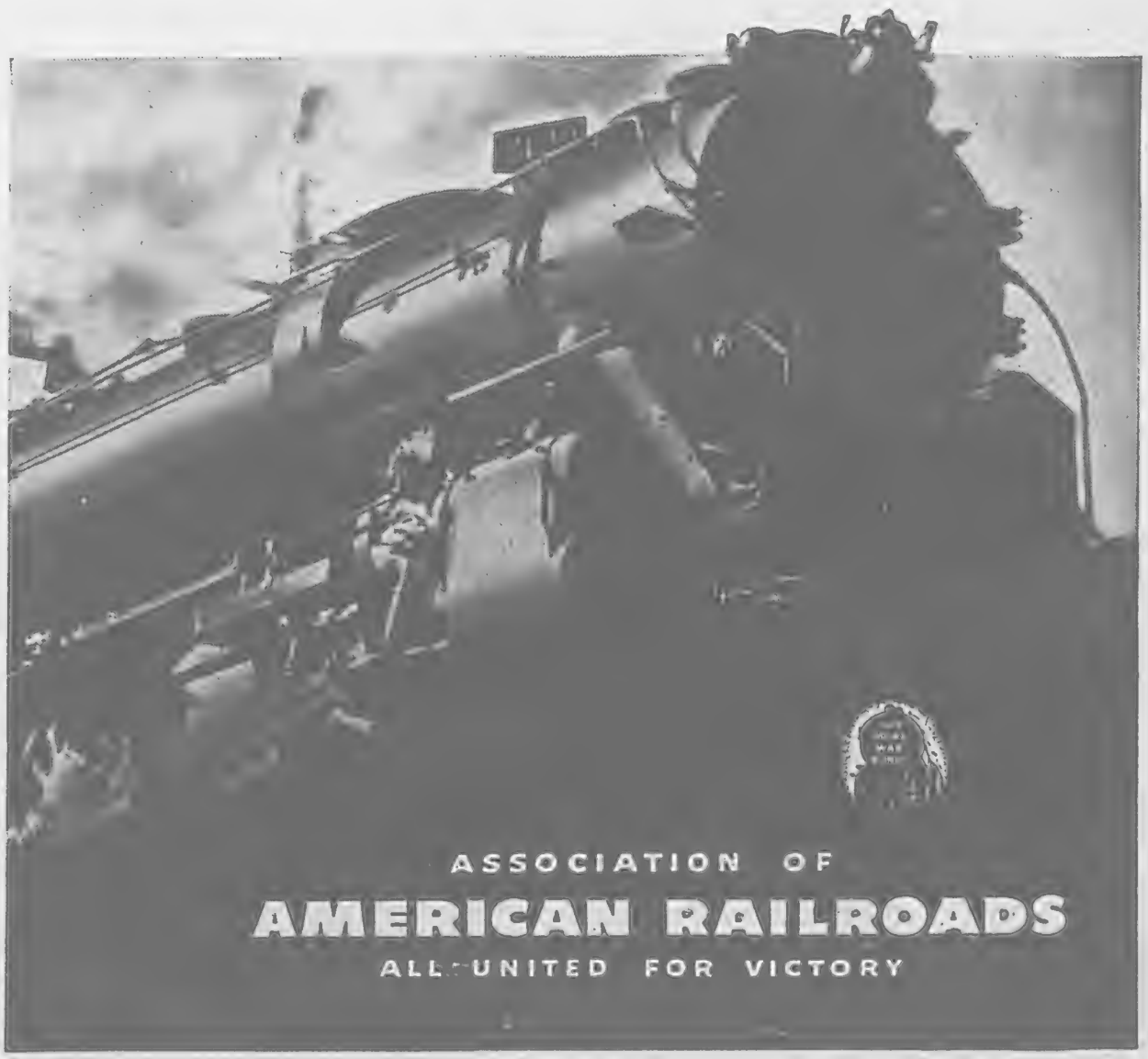
This takes people — people to maintain tracks and signals, to repair cars and engines, to man offices and stations, to operate yards.

Every job has a direct bearing on winning the war. You work for *quicker victory* when you work for the railroads.

Ask any railroad office or agent — any office of the Railroad Retirement Board — or the United States Employment Service.



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Ultra-fine $10 LHS Certified Punk $25.50
SORRY—Many LHS pipes are going to the armed services. Your dealer may not always be able to supply just the model you want.

Before the war the want ads in northern Irish papers frequently specified "Protestant only," and only the wartime need for labor has produced ads reading "Protestant or Catholic." Two of Northern Ireland's thirteen representatives to the British Parliament at Westminster have refused to take seats, as a gesture of protest against partition. The British are unlikely to take the lead in settling this question. One British official even went so far as to say that he thought some elements in Eire didn't really want it settled, explaining, "Some southern industrialists are now sheltered by Eireann tariff walls against Northern competition. With union, this protection would disappear." In Eire only 6 per cent of the population is Protestant, but they control 30 per cent of the country's wealth—a relic of the days when British rule favored them.

It is dissension like partition which helped to keep Eire out of the war and soured her political disposition. However, what the British are expected to do about their Protestant stepchildren in Northern Ireland who would feel deserted if the British withdrew is a neat question for some later Greater League of Nations.

It is possible that some settlement might be made (such as a federation) with a change of government in Eire. General Mulcahy's opposition party (named Fine Gael, which means Irish Brotherhood) stands for remaining within the British orbit, believing this the only practical way of uniting Ireland. De Valera, an ardent nationalist, will have none of it, wants Ireland to have absolutely no British ties, and says, "An equality of status is the only true basis for friendship with Britain." Incidentally, De Valera hasn't a real majority. His Fianna Fail party has only 67 Parliamentary seats. Mulcahy has 32, Labor 17, Farmers 14, Independents 8—a total of 71 against him. They show no signs of uniting to overthrow him, however.

IF the Irish man in the street is a bit mixed up on the arguments about neutrality, he doesn't know it. On two points all good citizens agree: first, if Germany won the war it would mean international disaster; and, second, if the Emerald Isle were invaded by the Germans or the Allies, the Irish would fight. But they say, "If the mighty Allies can't stop Germany, then surely the little bit we could contribute at the price of our hard-won neutrality wouldn't make any difference."

As for closing the German legation and the Japanese consulate to stop spies, Irishmen shrug it off calmly with, "Don't you believe Dev isn't keeping a sharp lookout on those birds."

"Dev" is the popular nickname for the American-born Prime Minister, Eamon De Valera. Complying with international law, he is stamping out as much espionage as he can find. But it is too much to assume that he is completely successful. The German legation is a legalized front for such activities. The German Minister is stern-eyed Herr Doktor Edward Hempel. The majority of the Germans in the country are the more than 200 interned airmen and sailors. Like the similarly interned Britons who made forced landings there, they are given freedom on weekends and holidays.

More likely, however, the real spies are the anti-Allied Irish. It is known that about 5 per cent of the Irish population are pro-German. There is a small "Green Front Party," Nazi-

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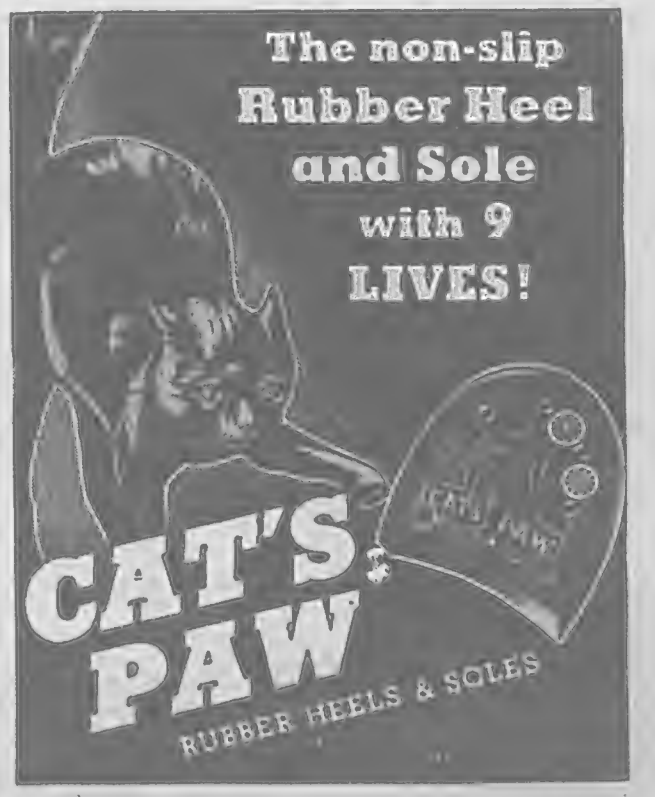


inspired. This party, which is anti-Jewish and anti-foreigner, is said to have more influence in the provinces than in wiser Dublin.

Far more dangerous are the Anglophobes who style themselves "the Irish Republic Army," although they have no connection with the former organization. That was banned by De Valera, who had 400 of its leaders imprisoned. Many, however, are still at large and undoubtedly do the bulk of German spying. They have been able to move freely into Northern Ireland and gather information.

The man in the street also poohpoohs the idea that British and American seamen have been lost for lack of Allied antisubmarine bases in Eire. Usually he will turn the question with reverse logic: "Can ye tell me how many lives have been lost because America didn't support the League of Nations when it should have?"

The strict Irish censors have made Ireland an ostrich with its head in the sand. They believe that what the people don't know won't bring them into war. Almost no Hollywood war films are shown, nor newsreels or any film with a hint of what the censors term propaganda. War books which might offend the Japs or Germans are taboo and all stories are kept strictly "neutral." Incidentally, censors ban the use of the term "British Isles," insisting on "these islands" instead.

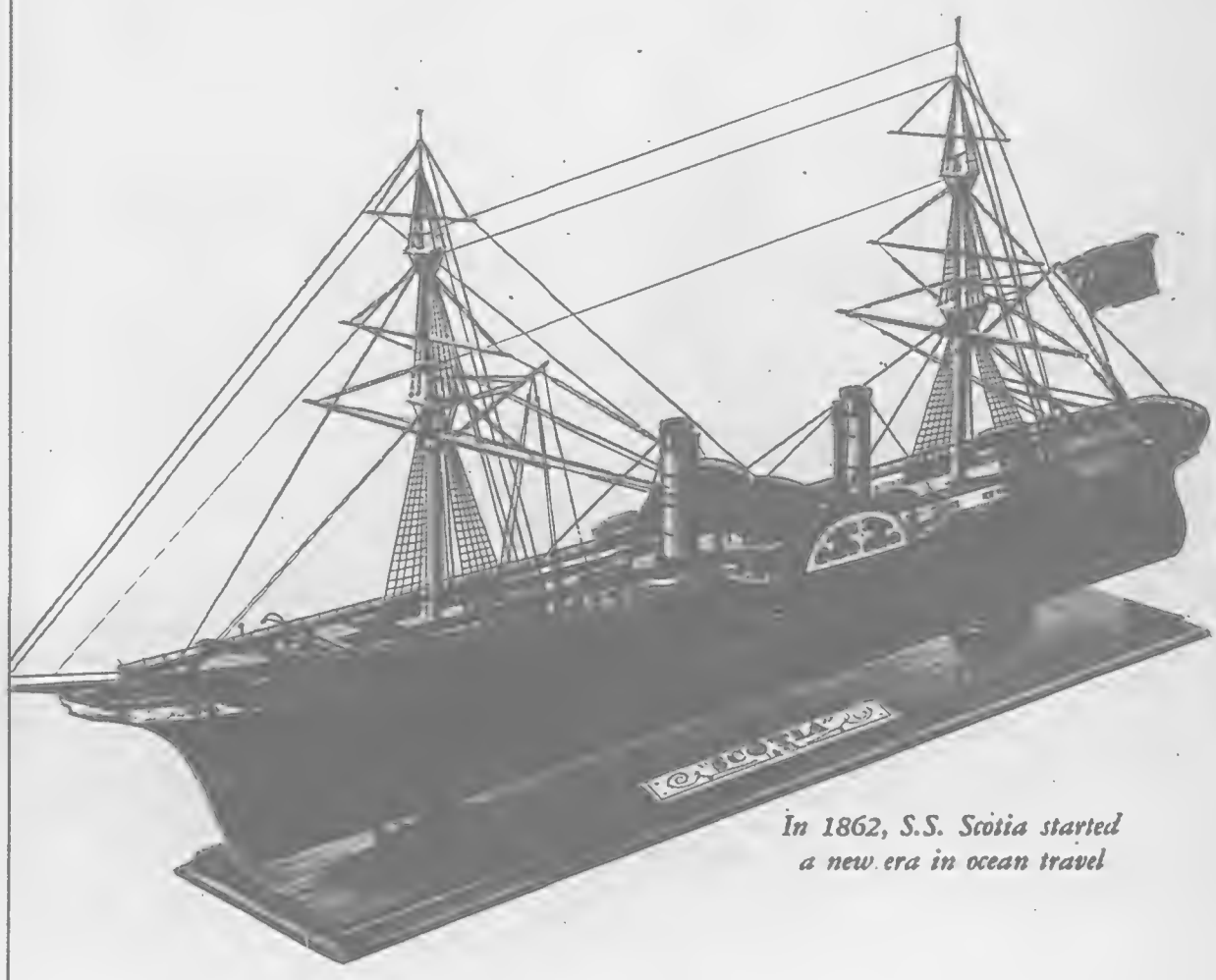
NO atrocity stories are printed. One official explained: "If we printed them we would have 300 letters in the morning from people saying they had seen the British do just as bad here only twenty years ago." The censors permitted the story of the bombing of Monte Cassino Abbey, and Ireland, which is probably the most Catholic nation in the world, was much perturbed. It considered the destruction of the abbey unnecessary. The Irish Times, which is probably the most pro-British paper in Dublin, scoffed at our excuse of "military necessity" in bombing Rome.

The censorship is inspired by Frank Aitken, Defense Minister, whose great worry is that he can't stop BBC radio programs.

Censorship has been adroitly evaded. Some foreign diplomats began circulating little pamphlets giving their side of the war news. These were not censored, probably because of extension of the principle of diplomatic immunity. For a time the German, Czech, Belgian, and Swedish representatives had the field to themselves. But when the German publication (which reached every priest and schoolteacher) became abusive of us, the American minister, David Gray, called on De Valera. He said America didn't want to start a paper, but would unless De Valera stopped the German one. De Valera refused, and shortly thereafter we began issuing Letter from America, which includes news interesting to the Irish, tells about feats of Irish-Americans, and gives atrocity details. The circulation is now in the twenty thousands and is quickly gobbled up.

The extreme emphasis on nationalism is reflected in almost everything the Irish do. For instance, they are now making a gigantic effort to revive the traditional Gaelic language, although 90 per cent of the people speak only English and have for seventy-five years. Largely because Gaelic was suppressed by the British, it is the language closest to the Irishman's heart,

INVEST IN INVASION — BUY MORE WAR BONDS



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if far from his tongue. All school children now must learn this difficult archaic language, and adult training is being pushed. Those who speak it perfectly wear a gold circle knitted on the coat lapel; students wear a red circle. De Valera himself is quite fluent, but modestly wears a red circle.

This attempted Gaelic revival in an English-speaking sphere forces new handicaps and will certainly complicate the settlement of the partition problem. But it has become a matter of principle and Ireland is hell-bent on doing it. One Irishman summed up the attitude when he threw back his head and chuckled, "Oh, glory be to God, and wouldn't we be classy to have other people having to speak our language for a change!"

It has been said, with considerable exaggeration, that in this war Ireland will do almost anything to help Britain, except to admit it openly. Neither country has ever announced the number of Irishmen fighting in the British Army. As Allied victory becomes more certain, Dublin rumor places it as high as 200,000, but 50,000 is much nearer the fact.

You can often spot these soldiers holidaying in Dublin by the ill-fitting civilian clothes the British Army lends them for this purpose. Eire will not permit foreign uniforms to be worn. These Irishmen have won many distinctions. Ireland takes this large enlistment for granted and nobody thinks it strange, for example, that the chief of the Eireann Air Force has a son in the British R. A. F.

Furthermore, some quarter of a million Irish workers are now employed in British war industries in both Britain and Northern Ireland. There are still 75,000 unemployed in Eire. Britain needs workers and therefore permitted commuter travel back and forth until March. Ireland also quietly helped Britain by reducing the coastal glare by three quarters. The announced reason was to save fuel and also "not to give aid to any belligerent ships." Obviously only Allied ships benefited. Some Southern Irish are reaping some benefit from a brisk smuggling trade into Northern Ireland. The border is an imaginary eighteen-mile line with hundreds of paths and roads wandering across. Discouraged customs officials admit that they catch only one smuggler in five. And spies presumably move back and forth with similar ease.

NEUTRALITY has cost Ireland dearly. For one thing, it is passing up an opportunity for wartime prosperity. If, like Northern Ireland, she had large American bases, money would be flowing like water down the River Shannon. As it is, poverty is increasing and the cost of living is sharply outdistancing wages. Tea, which is the Irish national drink, cost fifty cents before the war; now it costs nearly five dollars in the black market. Britain supplies all the tea. One half an ounce is permitted weekly, compared with more than two before the war. Soap is priceless. Linen is scarce. The famous Irish linen comes from Belfast, not Eire.

Sanctions by Britain and America could make Ireland suffer greatly, especially if British coal and American gasoline were stopped. Railways depend entirely on British coal and all other transport depends on our gasoline, which already is so scarce that it is rationed by medicine dropper.

There is no clothing shortage apparently, but prices are so high as to be prohibitive to most Irishmen. One man gave me his ration book, saying he couldn't afford to buy anything. People used to peddle these books on street corners until the police stopped it.

The Irish think highly of America. Some circles thought Eire might relax her strict neutrality after Pearl Harbor because of her great sympathy and friendship for us. It was in America in 1919 that De Valera raised $5,000,000 to support the cause of the Patriots. And it is in America that every Irishman has a brother Mike or an Uncle Pat; there are probably more Irishmen in America than there are in Ireland.

The Irish also remember warmly that America was the cradle of democratic revolution. Even today in De Valera's office hang copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. And when an American criticizes the Irish for the trouble they are causing Britain, they will answer admiringly, "And didn't ye start it first yourself in 1776?"

Nevertheless, although Eire would be pained to lose our friendship, she will do so unhesitatingly if she thinks it is the only alternative to compromising her neutrality. Many Irishmen hope, however, that after the war our cooling temper will let us see that Ireland wasn't as wicked as was thought. They argue that even America didn't enter the war until attacked—and nobody has attacked Ireland yet.

NO insistence on moral issues in this war will shake the Irishmen's passionate neutrality. For one thing, he is a hereditary cynic; centuries of broken promises have made him so. To him, this war is all part of a long story which didn't exactly begin with Hitler. He watched great nations fail lethargically to establish a system to stop aggression. Ireland was active in the League of Nations (De Valera was president of both the Council and Assembly) and watched it die of frustration. As early as 1934 Irish newspapers were warning of the menace of the Nazis. De Valera called for action when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia. By 1939 Ireland was weary of the world. She thinks the Allies are on the right track; but would they be any smarter this time? She couldn't tell and still can't.

There are some Anglo-Irish in Eire who believe her isolation is perilous and foolish. They know the Allied world regards Ireland with eyes of disgust. They fear she will get no seat at the peace table (something she definitely wants), or get one so far back in the corner that nobody can hear her even though she shouts.

The Irish are now holing in like squirrels for a long winter, believing the Allies will soon cut their supplies. Eire can feed herself. De Valera is appealing to farmers to increase production and is asking city dwellers to cut peat on their vacations. The average Irishman is worried but says with martyrlike resignation, "We have been through this before and we can do it again if it is something we believe in."

Unquestionably Ireland has lost caste with the United Nations. Yet when wartime passions have faded it is possible that the world will learn yet another lesson from Irish behavior: that unless such problems are dealt with sympathetically in advance, they may be dangerous cancers in times of emergency. To neglect them is not merely wrong but a blunder.

He who sows indifference will reap hostility—or at least neutrality.

THE END

OLD SARGE SEES ACTION

Continued from Page 20

and shipping water badly when I heard a voice say, "I've got his belt." I've learned to love those four little words.

It seems that Sergeant Gatty and an ensign named Smith had been lowered from the drifter by their feet, and they managed to grab me. They pulled on both my arms, and about a dozen guys in the drifter pulled on their legs—and the Atlantic reluctantly gave me up. Lieutenant Commander Walter Buckley, the chief engineer, and senior dentist Arthur Boillin supervised the salvage job.

After stretching me out on the deck of the drifter, the lads decided it was too rough to make ship that night and we headed back for shore. As it turned out, I had a dislocated shoulder and, after a long wait for an ambulance, I was taken to a hospital.

A FEW days' rest had me shipshape again, and the only thing that worried me was how to get back aboard the Gesundheit. The bay had been kicking up so violently that for a couple of days drifters couldn't go near the ship, and men were being hoisted to the deck in cargo nets.

With my left arm in a sling, I boarded a drifter late one afternoon. As we approached the Gesundheit, I heard Commander Sturges' voice through the amplifier: "Have you got Old Sarge aboard?"

"Aye, aye, sir," came the reply. Commander Sturges gave orders for the drifter to drop anchor at a certain spot. Then from the battleship's fantail deck a crane swung out over the drifter and lowered a large canvas bag with a sailor in it. The sailor got out of the bag, I got in, and then I floated through the air with the greatest of ease, making a perfect landing on the deck of the Gesundheit.

We convoyed a flock of empties on the voyage home. Just before we made port there was a ceremony in the wardroom, and Commander Buckley and Lieutenant Boillin, amid roars of laughter, were decorated with the Order of the SOS, meaning the "Salvage of Sarge," and I was awarded a gigantic tin medal—the "Lavender Heart."

As a final touch the boys read this poem:

"He tried to step from drifter to blister;
There was a splash, for Old Sarge missed her.
Now true, it's been said, in unlovely jest,
To leave Sarge alone might well have been best.
He would have been sore, and hurt to the core—
But think how he would have helped the war!

"For a U-boat commander would surely flee
If through his periscope he happened to see
The face of Old Sarge—held up for inspection—
Boy, what marvelous U-boat protection!
At the sight of that pan, hooked onto a man,
The U-boats would run as they do from a can."

THE END

NEXT OF KIN

Continued from Page 17

her hand and touched his cheek. "Darling," she said, "I'm an awful nuisance."

"You're fine," he said.

That was all. These brief fragmentary gestures recalled all the happy years. They were so near and so very far away.

He returned to the living room, went to the Elizabethan cupboard which housed his liquor and poured out a small drink of whisky. Taking to the deep chair which faced the French windows, he looked out on the early summer garden and tried for the hundredth time to resolve his thoughts, to make some decision. Men could not forever endure this sort of thing. God knew he had loved his son as deeply as any of the thousands of fathers all over the world who were daily suffering the same loss. But no more deeply. May could not have loved Jack more than those other mothers had loved their sons. And yet . . . He was suddenly struck by the enormous selfishness of it. They were indulging themselves. They were helping no one. And they might even be working some harm. To Lorna, for example.

But what could be done about it? His first duty was to see that May, his wife, got well and happy, became her sweet and gay self again. There was no sense in thinking of anything else: Or was there?

He closed his eyes and a fragment of that fatal clipping pictured itself in his mind:

WILLIAMS, JOHN D., JR., second lieutenant; father, John D. Williams, Mountain Highway, Fairbrook.

Wounded

BARNES, WILLIAM, sergeant; friend, Lester Smith, 973 River Road, Mamaroneck.

John's heart suddenly contracted in pity. And, for the first time in a long while, it wasn't pity for himself or for May for their loss. There was nothing more to do for Jack. He was no longer suffering or alone. And if he had been suffering, if he had been wounded, he would not have been alone. He would have come back, the beloved of a father, a mother, a sister. . . .

Lorna startled him a little as she came in. He glanced up sharply, as though he had been found out in his thoughts.

He was glad to see she had a faint pink in her cheeks and her eyes were brighter.

He rose and kissed her. "I think I'll treat myself to a little drive," he said.

"Don't go too far. There isn't much gas."

"I think there's enough," he said.

LORNA came to the door in response to his ring. He thought it better to ring than to use his latchkey, because if either May or Lorna suddenly saw a strange man in the house, it might upset them and make explanations difficult. It was better to introduce him at the door.

"Lorna," he said, "this is Sergeant Barnes. He's come to stay with us for a while."

Lorna glanced quickly at the solid face beneath the shock of blond hair and the cornflower-blue eyes. John knew the glance also included the crutches, although there wasn't a flick of a lash to indicate that. She held the door open wide.

"Come in," she said. "I'm glad you're going to visit us, sergeant."

She was as easy as if it were a favorite aunt come to stay a month. John had never seen any sort of situation faze her—except her mother. Now, if May would only let herself go . . .

"It's a pleasure to be here, miss," Sergeant Barnes said. "And I can't pretend it isn't a surprise."

"Dad, have you got the sergeant's bag?"

"Coming up," he said cheerfully.

Ever since he had explained the situation to Sergeant Barnes, two hours before, in the Mamaroneck roominghouse, he had felt better—better than he had in three months.

Lorna led the way into the living room, and John saw her unobtrusively kick a footstool nearer the big chair before the sergeant sat down. But the sergeant saw it, too, and laughed.

"Don't worry about me, miss," he said. "This marching tool is pretty much on the mend."

"Oh, I won't coddle you, sergeant," Lorna said. "But I do want to hear all about how you got it, and I'll bet you're crazy to tell."

A slow grin spread over the sergeant's face. "Don't we all, miss? It's a break for me to have a new audience."

John could hear May stirring in her room above, and he rehearsed in his mind the story he had invented: He had run into a Red Cross fellow who told him about this chap who had been wounded and given leave and had no people to go to. It sounded reasonable enough. Reluctantly he moved toward the door.

"Now tell me the honest truth, sergeant," Lorna was saying. "Just exactly what was Africa like?"

"Miss—" the sergeant began.

"Lorna to you."

Sergeant Barnes made an embarrassed effort. "Thank you, Miss—Lorna," he said. "Mine's Bill."

"All right, Bill," Lorna said. "Now about Africa."

"Lorna—it stank."

"That was my secret belief," Lorna said. Bill made room for her on the footstool, and she looked up at him intently in the characteristic, appraising way John knew so well. "What are you going to do about it?"

The blush again appeared on Bill's cheekbones.

"I'm going back," Bill said. "Wherever it is."

Lorna nodded. The results of her appraisal seemed to be good. "That was my secret belief," she said.

BILL was in safe hands, John decided as he went out of the room. Whatever little or much good Sergeant Barnes' presence in the household would do for May, this soldier, whose next of kin was a friend, was going to have a happy leave.

For a moment, as John entered their bedroom, his heart beat a little faster. There was something in the way May sat on the bench in front of her dressing table that blotted out the recent months.

"I heard a voice downstairs," she said. "We have a caller?"

"A visitor, dear. I came up to tell you."

"Of course I must go down and speak to him," she said.

He saw there had been no change. She showed a face so composed, so

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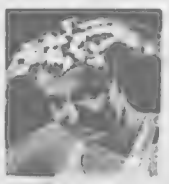

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falsely calm, so subtly hurt that he could have cried.

"I wanted to explain—" John began awkwardly. "That is, he has come for a little stay. He's a soldier, a wounded soldier who has no people to go to." And he stumbled through the invented remainder of the story.

"Oh," May said.

The hurt look in her eyes became more pronounced. "He has no people to go to," she repeated, and returned to her mirror and her hair.

He put his hand gently on her shoulder. "May," he said, "he needs kindness."

She uttered a small tuneless laugh. "Darling, haven't I always been kind to our guests?"

Going down the stairs, she stopped and gripped his arm. "But we must keep the door closed, dear," she whispered.

That was what she was doing, he thought—keeping the door closed.

"Of course," he said.

When they entered the living room, he said in a voice which was perhaps a little too loud and cheerful, "May, this is Sergeant Barnes, who has come to spend part of his leave with us."

"How do you do, ma'am?"

"How do you do?" she said in a small impersonal voice. "'Barnes, William, sergeant; friend, Lester Smith, 973 River Road, Mamaroneck.'"

"Yes, ma'am," Bill said, struggling with surprise and embarrassment.

"But you weren't killed," May stated simply.

And, wretchedly, John saw it wasn't going to work.

THERE was no repetition of that awkward scene throughout Bill's stay. May never again referred to the presence of his name on the casualty list. She was polite, civil, pleasant to him, as she would be to any visitor in her house. Otherwise he evidently made no impression on her as a personality or as, in any way, a factor in her life. She continued her complete absorption in the memory of her son.

Bill stayed on because John insisted on it. He had come into the household on a mission of good will, and John was determined he should not be turned away just because the scheme hadn't worked. In a few days it was more than that: he liked Bill for his own sake.

From fragmentary bits of information he pieced together the soldier's modest history. The son of immigrant English people, Bill had been left an orphan at ten. He had been a newsboy, a bootblack, a pop vender at the Polo Grounds and had thus seen himself through high school and into technical school, where he was studying to be a radio engineer when the war broke out. His best friend was Lester Smith. Lester Smith had now been called up. That was the story.

But because John worked a six-day week for the government at his small chuck-and-bolt factory in Stamford, it was upon Lorna he had to depend not to let Bill's stay down. She did not let Bill down. Lorna was a brick, John decided once more. She introduced Bill to all her friends, she took him to the club to watch the tennis and the dancing, and when Bill's foot was sufficiently healed, they walked in the woods and along country roads. On rainy days they read aloud and had violent arguments on economics.

"He's awfully smart," she told her father one evening. "Keener than most

of the boys I know of his age, because he's had to shift for himself. Maybe there's something to be said for this having no next of kin."

John heard the door above, the door opposite his bedroom, open and close, and he wondered if there wasn't something to be said for it.

"Thanks for what you're doing," he said to her. "I know what it must mean, giving up your vacation."

Lorna laughed. "Well, I'll have a few yarns to tell at college. Bill can certainly spin 'em. He's fun and he's smart, although I don't agree with all his ideas. If there were many more boys like him who've grown up without people, there'd be a revolution, sure."

"He's not bitter?"

"Oh, no. Just awfully progressive."

"Not bloody revolution," John said. "There's the whole American and British tradition back of him. Boys like Bill are heir to that as much as any of us. If they haven't got people, they still have, in a way."

"Like Bill—and us."

"Yes," John said thoughtfully. It gave him rather a good feeling. It compensated somewhat for his unhappiness over the unhappiness of that poor lost darling upstairs, standing tearless be-

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

These days a little tact will go a long way. For instance, a nervous little man walked into a railway depot, looked around for a seat, and found them all filled. He stood a couple of minutes, then hurriedly glanced at his watch, grabbed his bag, and rushed out to the station platform. The effect was all that could be desired. The rest of the people in the station picked up their luggage and ran. Shortly afterward the little man returned, picked out a seat near the warm fire, and sat down to wait for the train—which wasn't due for thirty minutes.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

side the bed in the room with the closed door. "Like us."

"And, dad," Lorna said, "couldn't it be a little the other way around? If people lose sons, couldn't there be hundreds of sons . . ."

She didn't finish. Her father's hand closed over hers. "Lorna, you're swell."

"But, dad, I *like* him."

"Of course you do," he said soothingly. "You've never met any one quite the sort."

"That may be it," Lorna said.

On another evening they both came to him, Lorna and Bill. May had gone upstairs for her evening ritual, and John sat sunk and depressed in his chair. It did not relieve him to see Bill's face troubled, nor to see the tips of Lorna's fingers touching Bill's big hand.

"He wants to go away," Lorna said.

"Why, Bill," John said, "you've got weeks yet. That foot is in no condition."

"It's this way, Mr. Williams," Bill said. "I've been here almost a month and—and I don't think I ought to park on your hospitality any longer. You see"—he struggled with his embarrassment—"it isn't as if I'd been able to do anything to help Mrs. Williams, and—"

"You've done a great deal to help us, Bill," John said soberly, "Lorna and me. I hope you've been a little happy here."

Bill's ready blush came. He said simply, "There's been nothing like it in my life. It isn't that. It's just that—well, instead of making it better for Mrs. Williams, I'm afraid I make it worse. Every time she sees me, she's bound to think how easily those two names on the casualty list might have been reversed."

Bill was grateful but determined. Nothing could budge his decision. He left the next afternoon.

TO John, after Bill's departure, the house was emptier than ever. It had been a mistake, he saw, to try to relieve, even by a little, the ache of his son's absence. Not to have succeeded would have left things as they had been. To have succeeded, as Bill had, at least in part, meant two losses instead of one. And, to make matters worse, he was now deprived of Lorna's encouragement, which had been his mainstay. She took care of her mother, attended to her household duties as conscientiously as ever, but her abstractedness, her long silences proclaimed that she had about lost hope in the situation. Only May seemed unchanged by Bill's leaving.

It had become a bleak house, a dour house, he decided. One evening, when he arrived home after dinner to find the house dark, his feeling turned to one of slight alarm as he fitted his latchkey. As he closed the door he heard the sounds of sobbing from the living room. Quickly he crossed the hall and switched on the light. Lorna lay crumpled on the sofa with her face in her hands.

"Darling," he said, hurrying to her side, "what's this?"

She turned up a tear-stained face. "Oh, daddy," she said, "I said horrible things to her. I just couldn't stand it any longer!"

He shook her gently. "Come, darling. Talk sense. You couldn't stand what?"

Lorna sat up; with an effort controlled her voice. "She was in there—in the room—all afternoon. I was afraid; it was so quiet, and I went up at about six o'clock. She was on her knees by his bed, praying. I just couldn't stand it any longer, daddy. I must have lost my head. And so I told her."

"Told her what, dear?"

"I told her she was selfish. I told her she was spoiling my life because—because I loved Bill so."

For several seconds he just held her close while the surprise and wonder of this stole into his middle-aged brain. Not for a second had he guessed. If he had, he would never have let Bill go.

"I told her she had driven him away," Lorna was saying.

"What did your mother say?"

"Nothing. For a long time kneeling there she just looked at me. You know the way she has—as if some one had hurt her. I went out and came down here. A little later I heard her crying. But I couldn't go up. I felt so bitter."

John's heart leaped. "You heard her crying?"

"Oh, yes. For a long time."

"But, Lorna—" He looked into her face. "Don't you see? She hasn't cried since it happened. This may mean—Lorna, we must go up to her at once!"

They ran up to May's room. The bed had been laid upon, but she wasn't there. They crossed to the room opposite, Jack's room.

"The door is open," Lorna murmured in a frightened voice.

John pressed the light. The room was empty. The bed was turned down as usual—but there was a difference which, much as he had prayed for it for months, shocked him now. The pajamas, dressing gown, and slippers had disappeared.

Good God, what has she done? he thought.

They searched Lorna's room, the bathrooms, the entire floor, when the front door opened and they heard her voice.

"There she is," Lorna said, and started down. Her father held her back, pulled her into May's bedroom, closed the door to a crack and switched off the light.

"Wait," he said.

Lorna's hand trembled on his arm. "Dad, whom is she talking to?"

"Wait," he said. "You must let her do this herself."

"Do what, dad?"

"I don't know exactly," he said.

They could see the shadows advancing up the stairway. First May came into view, her lips and eyes smiling. She stopped at Jack's door. And then Bill followed.

John felt the knot tighten in his throat. He held his breath as he saw May hesitate, her fingers on the knob. Then he saw the slight firming of her chin, and she pushed the door in.

"This is your room, Bill," she said in the light warm tone he remembered. Her laugh was gay. "At least until Lorna changes it for you. I wonder where those idiots can be hiding."

THE END

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Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

FIGHTING WORDS: Marion Allen, whose son is with the armed forces in Italy, says it is all the family can do to keep her nephew, Peter Booth of Huntington, Long Island, from joining up. His relatives think he is a bit too young; but Peter, at four, makes up in strategy what he lacks in years. He insists, "I could fight good because I'm little, and the bullets would go right over my head."

FASHIONS ON THE HOOF: Handmade raffia shoes are unrationed. Gay, smart, and cool, they make festive shoes for summer. Even the heels are made of raffia instead of precious war material, and they have a smooth finish inside so that stockings aren't necessary. Made by a group of Russians in a lower East Side studio, in New York, they are sold by a Fifth Avenue store and come with wedge or flat soles, in green, black, red, brown, and natural. Each pair takes a day to make. The workers range in age up to and including Mrs. Nadejda Stember, who is eighty-five.

FAST WORKER: Mary Wright, wife of Designer Russel Wright, says she's always in such a hurry to get her breakfast dishes done that she washes as they eat, and Russel appears increasingly nervous as she whips his plates out from under his nose. She admits she's working on a plan to wash them *before* they start eating, and Russel says he doesn't know where his next scrambled egg is coming from, unless she devises some way of suspending it in midair, so he can snap at it after the fashion of Halloween bobbing for apples. The Wrights live in a fabulous penthouse on top of the world at Thirty-fourth Street and Park Avenue,

New York, from which they and their white Persian cat can admire both rivers. The cat is very special too—has one blue and one yellow eye. Doubtless a Russel Wright design.

STRANGER THAN FICTION: Six-year-old Teddy Zarief, brother of the New York quadruplets born this spring, hit a new high in original excuses when he was late to school several months before their birth. He told his teacher he was late because he had to help his mother put her shoes on, as she was expecting quadruplets. Birth of the quartet did not surprise the parents or Dr. Benjamin J. P. Watson, director of Sloane Hospital, who suspected a multiple birth several months earlier and ordered X-rays in December. They confirmed his suspicions. Born a month before they were due, the babies arrived in rapid succession. Within the space of thirty-one minutes Mrs. Zarief became the mother of three new daughters and a son. There are no other quads on record as having been born in New York City, except a set that was baptized on December 11, 1644, in the Dutch Reformed Church. Violet M. Turner, amateur genealogist, unearthed this bit of history.

HOW TO MAKE AN ORANGE WORK OVERTIME: The Florida Citrus Commission reports that the citrus industry gives its oranges, grape-

fruit, tangerines, and limes a terrific workout. Practically nothing is wasted by canners of juice. Oil is pressed from the peels; the tangerine oil goes to Russia, where it probably finds its way into vodka. Orange oil winds up in orange gelatine. Grapefruit oil goes to England to flavor soft drinks. After oils are extracted, dry peels are sold as cattle feed. A residue of the peel becomes pectin, which is used to jell sugar. The housewife can turn *her* citrus peels to other ends, if she has a good sharp knife. With my own eyes I have seen charming table decorations evolved from the hides of oranges, grapefruit, and limes. By cutting about a quarter off the top of each fruit, then scooping out the fruit itself, to use as sections in salads or desserts, the cup-like peels (that larger bottom part) may be given a slight ballast of fern in a little water, then filled with short flowers whose stems stand securely in the ferns. It takes very few and very inexpensive blossoms to make an ornamental conversation piece for the center of the table. . . . The job of educating women to buy citrus fruit by the pound instead of by the piece is proceeding slowly, due to the reluctance of both grocer and housewife to change their ways of doing business. Since most people buy oranges for their juice, weight is a far more thrifty method of buying than by the dozen.

FLATTERER: A bit of flattery that almost flattened her out is told by an attractive USO hostess just this side of thirty. An extremely young sailor visited the USO club in a Southern city and danced with her to the exclusion of girls his own age. Thinking he was too shy to approach them, she offered to introduce him. He replied, "Oh, please, ma'am, I'd rather dance with you. You remind me so much of my mother!"

PRESS CONFERENCE HIGH LIGHTS

Continued from Page 23

you tell us why, between the five of them, they can only get out three press releases a week?"

Reporters who cover Secretary of the Navy Knox's conference regularly became dissatisfied, some months back, with the small quantity of news they were getting. One day they marched into the conference and sat down. Someone asked a single perfunctory question. Then there was silence. Suddenly all the reporters arose, said: "Thank you, Mr. Secretary," and left. Knox immediately dispatched emissaries to the press room to patch things up. At his next conference, he opened up like a life-insurance salesman left alone with a 21-year-old millionaire. Since that time, his conferences have produced more news than those of any other Cabinet officer.

Reporters who cover the Navy Department like Knox. They are often given background information by Navy officers about military actions which have taken place but have not been announced publicly. On the basis of this knowledge they are able to ask questions of Knox which make him smile and squirm. For instance, they knew that our forces had occupied the Aleutian island of Amchitka for some weeks before it was announced publicly. At every press conference they would ask Knox some leading question about the Aleutians. Finally the Japs discovered our force on Amchitka and Knox broke down and let the correspondents print the secret they'd been keeping.

Mrs. Roosevelt started having press conferences back in a time when few women could get newspaper jobs in Washington. Trying to give the girls a boost, she established the rule that only women could come to her conferences. This forced all the press associations and out-of-town bureaus to keep at least one woman correspondent on hand. The girls have since organized the Mrs. Roosevelt Press Conference Association. They go regularly to the White House when Mrs. Roosevelt is in town, and are seated in one of the

"Well, John, since it's leap year, I—"

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living rooms. Mrs. Roosevelt comes in and shakes the hand of each reporter. Then the girls ask a few polite questions.

Male reporters have long grumbled at being shut off from a news source merely because of their sex. Gordon Cole of PM's Washington staff took the bull by the horns and applied for membership in the Mrs. Roosevelt Press Conference Association. He was turned down. But when Mrs. Roosevelt returned from her South Pacific trip, she relented and allowed men to attend her first press conference.

Another one-big-happy-family press conference is conducted by Secretary of the Interior Ickes, who is the fastest man with a comeback in Washington. There is a considerable group which feels that Ickes could charge admission to his conference and still draw a good attendance. He has maintained a running rib on all correspondents since 1933. Recently they were questioning him about reports that he was going to be editor of a Government-owned newspaper.

"We heard about it from a reputable newspaperman," insisted one of the reporters.

"A *what?*" Ickes asked in amazement.

"Well, a man of some reliability said . . ." the reporter resumed.

"See," cried Ickes triumphantly, "he's hedging!"

ICKES is never at a loss for an answer. He will even admit his own mistakes. When reporters were asking him about conditions in Hawaii, one of the possessions under his jurisdiction, he admitted they weren't very good.

"People in Hawaii contend that every article in the Bill of Rights has been abrogated, except possibly freedom of the press," said one reporter.

"Haven't they violated that yet?" asked Ickes.

"I'm not sure," the reporter replied.

"Well, give them time," he said.

When someone asked him about the troublesome political situation in Puerto Rico, he said he thought things were getting better.

"Why," said the astonished reporter. "I read that eighteen out of the thirty-nine members of the legislature walked out in a body yesterday."

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"That's less than walked out last time," said Ickes. "The situation's improving."

His willingness to give a candid, if not acrid, reply to any question on any subject made him good copy for years. But he's been getting wary of press conference traps lately. When reporters tried to get him to commit himself on the question of drafting war-time labor, Ickes sparred carefully.

"Did you say you favored it?" asked a reporter at length.

"If I said anything at all on the subject," replied Ickes, "I would say that. But I don't think I'm saying anything today."

On another occasion the correspondents worked him slowly out on the end of a limb about synthetic rubber, but he rescued himself with the statement:

"We rubber experts just talk among ourselves."

"Well, what's the gossip?" persisted a correspondent.

"We use sign language," Ickes replied.

OFFICIAL Washington realizes that a line of propaganda can be put out through a press conference where it might not be possible otherwise. President Roosevelt demonstrated the technique early this year when he delivered to his press conference the little allegory about Dr. New Deal and Dr. Win The War. This will develop into an important element in the coming campaign. It was an idea which the President was able to put over simply and informally at his press conference—whereas it would have sounded out of place in a speech or a formal announcement.

When he had finished his little story, one correspondent fired the opening gun of the press conference campaign to smoke the President out on the fourth term. The President waved the question aside as "puerile." But the battle is on and Mr. Roosevelt knows better than anyone else that, from now on, there will be a lot of puerile questions asked. And the chances are that it will be at a press conference that he will, one day, answer one of those questions.

THE END

"Fortunately, he has a lot of electricity in his hair!"

POSTAL PARSONS

Continued from Page 29

lane or entering a church. The first article is always something about God, such as God Loves You or God Does Care. In the back is a selected list of Bible readings on the same subject.

The postal parsons have watched the adage "Man's adversity is God's opportunity" work itself out in Life-Study Fellowship. Nearly every one who joined has come into the circle because he wanted to be happier.

In fact, Fellowship didn't really start succeeding until Wood himself was worried. By the winter of 1940, when it had a few thousand members, he was buoyed by the knowledge that at least he was doing good for at least a tiny section of humanity, but depressed because Boren, as Fellowship's angel, was giving out more money than Fellowship received. This condition may have been blessed, but Wood faced feed and fuel bills, not to mention the stork whose first visit had to be financed.

With this mixed mental outlook, he decided to try improving the letter sent to persons responding to Fellowship's "messages." It was addressed to troubled persons, and Wood knew exactly how a hard-pressed human felt.

The letter he composed became Fellowship's prime piece of literature. Once it began to circulate, the organization began expanding. Today, with 100,000 members, Fellowship grows by some 500 a week.

THE postal parsons have adapted that letter for one of their messages. With God All Things Are Possible is the headline. The ad asks: "Are you worried about the war? Are you worried about any personal problems—such as Money, Family, Health, or Love Problems? Do you ever get Lonely, Unhappy, Discouraged? If you have these problems or others like them, then here is a remarkable New Way of Prayer that is helping thousands of men and women to glorious New Faith, Happiness, and Joy."

This is no boast. Hundreds of letters a week to Fellowship read like this: "Some time ago I became a member of this Fellowship, and oh, how I do praise God for his goodness to me and my family! God has answered my prayers. I am happier than I have ever been in my life."

Women whose homes were wretched with bickering have written that now their husbands *are* the world's most wonderful men. Bashful individuals have learned how to make friends. Spendthrifts have started to save. Hypochondriacs have become happy.

The war weaves a somber note through the mail as mother after mother asks for prayers to say for her son's safety. Servicemen write, giving their care-of-postmaster addresses for Faith to follow them. Baptist ministers down South use the Fellowship literature in their churches, as do more than a few others throughout the country.

Today Wood and Boren think they have the answer they set out to find four years ago. Although they themselves intend to continue using Noroton's post office for their pulpit, they probably would accept a challenge from any minister in the country who dared them to try filling his empty pews.

They wouldn't preach much on international affairs or on domestic politics. They'd tell their congregation how to solve problems in terms of the Golden Rule and common sense, and preach sermons designed to uplift their faith. Most of all, they would sponsor rugged individualism and attempt to persuade people to improve their personal lives.

From the counterbalance of Wood's conviction that religion should provide solace and uplift and Boren's imperishable belief in common sense has come a philosophy which teaches 100,000 men and women to regard their religion not merely as a refuge but as a way of life.

Right now the postal parsons are working it up into a book to be called With God. It will be the Bible interpreted as a cheerful, helpful, day-to-day guide to living. To make it easy, the reader who hasn't time to go through the whole book at once will be able to look up his problem in the index and turn to a chapter and prayer that will lead him.

THE END

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LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

GOING MY WAY *(Paramount)* *Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, Risë Stevens*

THERE'S an indescribable impact in the first scene of Going My Way. It's just a simple view of a church—that's all. Without reference to creed, the dignity of this quiet, welcoming refuge tucked away at the end of a busy street gives a rare sense of stability and peace and sets you in tune for the remarkable things to follow.

You'll shortly find yourself headed for the rectory—but not before you've picked up an odd young curate who's also going that way. Things go badly with him from the start. On the way to his new post at St. Dominick's he manages to run afoul of the parish gossip, toss a baseball through a window, and get soaked by a water wagon. It's Bing Crosby—Father "Chuck" O'Malley. (*Not* Bing as Father O'Malley, mind you—just Bing as Bing. Or Father O'Malley as Bing, if you like.) He looks all right in a black coat and straw hat; no better and no worse in a sweat shirt nonchalantly decorated with three monkeys. But crusty old Father Fitzgibbon (Barry Fitzgerald), founder of the parish, can't get used to it. He's been looking for an assistant, not an athletic coach. Things are bad enough around St. Dominick's already, what with the mortgage and everything, without these newfangled ideas. The disturbing new curate isn't content with leaping hedges and taking the neighborhood toughs to a baseball game—he gives extemporaneous singing lessons at the rectory piano, too! It's a pretty state of affairs when Father Fitzgibbon can't kneel at his own altar without being interrupted by Three Blind Mice echoing lustily up from the cellar!

Finally there's nothing to do but see the bishop about getting the young upstart replaced. Father Fitzgibbon does—and the heartrending manner in which he returns from the interview (in which he has learned who his new curate really is) is one of the finest bits of acting you'll ever see. This is one of the two superb high spots in the picture. The other is the moment when Bing (or Father O'Malley), who has been quietly and efficiently pulling things together at St. Dominick's all along, reaches the climax of his work with the problem kids. As he gives a single note to each group of these half-cynical, half-eager tough guys, and magically produces from the reluctant gang one rich and perfect chord, you'll be startled into a sudden realization of what the whole story means. There aren't any very good words to describe the harmony of human relations. This scene does it perfectly without.

From this point on the picture spreads out and loses its nearly perfect quality. Everything is dragged in to save St. Dominick's finances, including the Metropolitan Opera, Tin Pan Alley, and a concert tour by the now miraculously professional choirboys. Risë Stevens as Chuck's opera-singing boyhood sweetheart lends her voice and influence, and helps sell one of his songs. The man who holds the church mortgage is conveniently softened by a saccharine love episode involving his son. But before all this gets quite out of hand, the church burns down and throws the plot back into focus. Father Fitzgibbon faces this new crisis so mellowed by recent events that he comes through with flying colors. And Father O'Malley goes his way, to help straighten things out somewhere else.

The fine sensitivity of Director-Author-Producer Leo McCarey (coupled with excellent casting and great wealth of human detail) is responsible for the unique appeal of this whole story. It's rich in moving, intimate scenes. The Irish Catholic setting contributes a lot to the atmosphere, but is not essential to the values involved, which go beyond any one nationality or sect. The thesis that being good and being human are not so different after all is delightfully demonstrated by Father O'Malley. Going his way doesn't seem too easy, nor yet too impossible—it just seems the only real way to go. Don't miss this one—it's Special with a capital S.

SHOW BUSINESS *(RKO).*

Eddie Cantor, George Murphy, Joan Davis, Constance Moore

IN that celluloid world of show business, where life is just one long production number and the boys and gals break into well rehearsed song and dance at every emotional crisis, a new vaudeville foursome finally makes the Palace: Eddie Cantor and Joan Davis (comedy), George Murphy and Constance Moore (romance). Throw 'em all together (*circa* 1917), with Nancy Kelly for menace, and you get the familiar sequence of dressing-room camaraderie, heartache, reconciliation, and wedding bells. But even this can't quench the hyperthyroid appeal of Eddie Cantor, who bounds lovably throughout, singing the songs that brought him fame. Capable Joan supports him (Amazon fashion) and the rest share the scattered proceedings, which bust right into slapstick and remain there most of the time. Producer Cantor has generously embellished his memories—"Dinah," for instance, knocks out the optics in dazzling black-and-white, then goes into a flash effect which all but splits the cerebrum. It's lavish, it's laughable, it's got Cantor. What more do you want?

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

FOLLOW THE BOYS (Universal). George Raft, Vera Zorina. Drama with music.
KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY (Producers' Corp.-U. A.). Nelson Eddy, Charles Coburn. Musical.
LADY IN THE DARK (Paramount). Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland. Drama with music.
SEE HERE, PRIVATE HARGROVE (M-G-M). Robert Walker, Donna Reed. Comedy.
SONG OF BERNADETTE (20th Cent.-Fox). Jennifer Jones, Charles Bickford. Drama.
THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN (Warners). Fredric March, Alexis Smith. Drama.
THE PURPLE HEART (20th Cent.-Fox). Dana Andrews, Richard Conte, Sam Levene. Drama.
THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER (M-G-M). Irene Dunne, Alan Marshal. Drama.
UNCERTAIN GLORY (Warners). Errol Flynn, Paul Lukas. Drama.
UP IN ARMS (Goldwyn-RKO). Danny Kaye, Dinah Shore. Musical.

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Directed by Clarence Brown, produced by Sidney Franklin, based on the poem by Alice Duer Miller, M-G-M presents—

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The poem remains, a thing apart, of great beauty. The film emerges as one of the most exciting emotional experiences the screen can provide.

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Next year we'll be twenty-one!

—Leo

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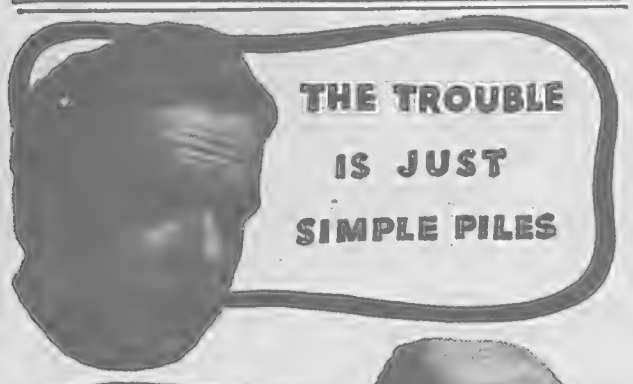

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BESSIE ARBRUSTER GOES A-SCUTTLIN'

Continued from Page 26

smoke momentarily, and through ghostly swirls the Sweet Alice, trailed by the New Arrival, came puttering toward the Lark and hove to about twenty-five feet away. Pedigo and Doc cut their motors. Bessie handed the megaphone to Crosby.

"Doc," ordered Crosby, "drop Dave off at the ladder amidships. Has he got gloves?"

"Ye-up. Gloves, heavy boots, a heavy raincape, a mask, and two good flashlights. All he needs is a prayer, and I'm furnishing that."

"Very good. The Lark will do the towing. Tell Dave I'll shoot him a life line when he gets into the Glasgow's bow. He can attach the Glasgow's cable to it and drop it to me. I'll . . ."

From the molten intestines of the ill-fated freighter came a low, sullen rumbling.

"We've got to work fast," shouted Crosby. "Good luck, everybody."

A BATTERY of searchlights on shore suddenly blinked into startling existence and their rays swept the scene. A bimotored Navy plane zoomed above them, flashing periodically as a photographer busily recorded the scene.

Doc's New Arrival grumbled alongside the Glasgow and Crosby and Bessie saw Dave leap for the ladder, grab it, swing perilously for a moment and then move upward. Crosby noticed that Dave was shielding his eyes. He snapped the short-wave switch.

"Commander Crosby to shore battery," he barked. "Douse those damn lights! They're hindering us. Stand by for orders."

"Who's handlin' them lights?" asked Bessie curiously.

"My handful of men and the few Glasgow men who were aboard when the fire was discovered . . . the ones who cut her loose."

"Who told 'em to?"

"The second mate."

"He done what was right."

"That," said Crosby grimly, "remains to be seen."

Bessie trained her searchlight on the bow deck of the freighter. Dave appeared, waved his arms up and down. Meanwhile Crosby had adjusted the deck mortar on the Lark. He pulled the trigger, and a rope coil, twisting like an angry snake, shot high over Dave's head and back toward the forward funnel of the Glasgow.

In less than five minutes Dave had lowered the thin but strong steel cable to the deck of the Lark and Crosby had attached it to the stern hook.

Dave donned his mask, waved, and disappeared, and with him went the prayers of Bessie, Crosby, Doc, and Shorty. Pedigo was too busy worrying about his own safety.

Bessie waited until Doc had maneuvered to the stern of the Glasgow and then spoke into the short-wave mike.

"Doc, Pedigo," she ordered, "give 'er all you got!"

Bessie strained with the Lark.

"Uhn . . ." she grunted. "Uhn. C'm'on, baby. Use them horses. Jest a little more now. Uhn."

The mighty bow of the Glasgow shuddered. The cable strained and squealed. The Lark shook until her dishes and cutlery rattled. But slowly, painfully, the doomed Glasgow nosed from south-

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southwest to south—south to south-southeast. Then, at long, agonizing last—east and outward bound.

"How fast are we moving?" Crosby asked.

Bessie trained the searchlight on the water and studied it briefly.

"'Bout three knots," she said. "Tide'll be workin' with us in ten minutes. Then we should make five."

"It's ten o'clock," said Crosby. "By ten thirty we should be at least two miles offshore and in deep water. Give me that megaphone."

Another violent explosion blasted the innards of the crippled Glasgow. Crosby trained the searchlight on the freighter's bow deck and blinked it several times. He shook his head worriedly. A masked figure, like something from Dante's Inferno, suddenly appeared on the bow. Its arms flapped up and down feebly.

"GOOD boy!" roared Crosby through the megaphone. "Are you ready to leave?"

Dave's voice came faintly, so faintly that Bessie barely caught part of what he said.

". . . couple of hatches to open, sir."

Bessie felt the tide change and, with it, a shift of wind. They gathered speed.

Crosby glanced at his luminous wrist watch. Then he dived into the cabin and returned with a hatchet. He pressed the horn button. Then he raised the hatchet and with one sharp blow, severed the cable. The Lark zoomed ahead so swiftly that he was nearly thrown out, and Bessie saved her balance only by clinging for dear life to the wheel.

Bessie glanced astern. "There goes Doc," she said.

They saw the New Arrival, virtually encompassed by flames from the freighter, heaving to beside the rope ladder.

"Ye all right, Doc?" Bessie bawled through the megaphone.

"Ye-up," came Doc's voice. "I'll get Dave. You get the hell out of here. Too rough for a lady."

"Might as well use discretion, Bess," Crosby said quietly. "There's nothing we can do here."

Bessie gave the Lark full throttle and headed shoreward in the direction of the Coast Guard lights which were blinking periodically. In the wake of the Lark, Pedigo's Sweet Alice weaved and bobbed nervously away from the freighter.

About half a mile from the Glasgow, Bessie cut motor. Pedigo sprayed past them. Bessie swung the searchlight toward the Glasgow. Dave's work had been accomplished. The doomed vessel was settling rapidly, stern first.

"He's off! Dave's off!" shouted Bessie excitedly, lowering the glasses. "An' Doc's highballin' away now."

"Good," said Crosby fervently.

Bessie watched the trim little New Arrival cutting through foaming crests and bobbing in black troughs as she raced away from the Glasgow and death.

B'room-mm! Pfoof!

It was an earthquake, a volcano, a hurricane in deadly combination. Bessie and Crosby were hurled off their feet. A terrific gust of wind shrieked over them and the Lark heeled until her rail hit water.

"Thank God," muttered Crosby. "Thank God. The force went up—not out. Perhaps . . ."

His words were drowned out by the roar of the Lark's motor as Bessie, her eyes white with fear and her trembling jaw set, swung the bow toward the blazing maelstrom. Debris was tumbling all around them. Several smaller pieces crashed onto the bow deck and the Lark trembled and balked. Crosby had the glasses now and he was peering ahead.

"Get set, Bess," he roared. "I expected this."

It looked something like a snow-capped mountain gone berserk. It came roaring and tumbling and churning out of nowhere, spraying death and destruction. They took it at three quarters. One moment they were sinking down, down, down, and the next they were rising as though a giant hand had clutched the Lark to rip her from the sea. A terrific jolt, a sickening crash as the Lark's bow smashed into a splintered spar. Then, like a roller coaster, a hissing roll into black nothingness.

"We made it," said Crosby weakly. He manned the searchlight and swept it ahead in a wide arc. "Two points abaft port bow," he said quickly. "Full speed ahead, Bess."

She saw them at the same time. They were clinging to the shattered hulk of the New Arrival.

Doc's pride and joy lay on her side, her back broken, her life gone. Doc and Dave were hanging onto a twisted rail. Their legs were dangling in the water, their faces were pale, and their eyes a little wild.

Bessie recovered her voice.

"You—you all right, fellows?"

The Lark made a sharp turn and maneuvered to the wreck on the windward side.

"Where the hell have you been?" demanded Doc gruffly. "Pleasure cruising again?"

Bessie inhaled deeply.

As Crosby helped them aboard, the radio crackled and Bessie switched over for reception. It was Pedigo.

"Need any help out there?" he asked politely.

"Where ye located?" asked Bessie suspiciously.

"Back t' basin. Raced the big wave in. I just happened to think you might be in trouble."

Bessie blew up.

"Trouble? Why, you pig-faced, water-kneed wart—no! We're jest out here eatin' cheese 'n' crackers 'n' drinkin' beer. If you wuz here I'd . . ."

Doc snapped off the switch. "Watch your pressure," he said. "Remember what happened to the Glasgow's boilers."

IT was nearly noon the next day when Bessie answered the phone.

"Angler's Inn," she said amicably. "Miss Arbruster talkin'. Oh—mornin', commandant. Lovely mornin'. What's that? To Washington? Tomorrow? Cripes! Jest wait a minute, commandant."

She yelled for Charlie.

"You gotta handle a double shift tomorrow," she told Charlie. "Me and the commandant and Dave and Doc has got to go to Washington. We gotta be situated. O. K.?"

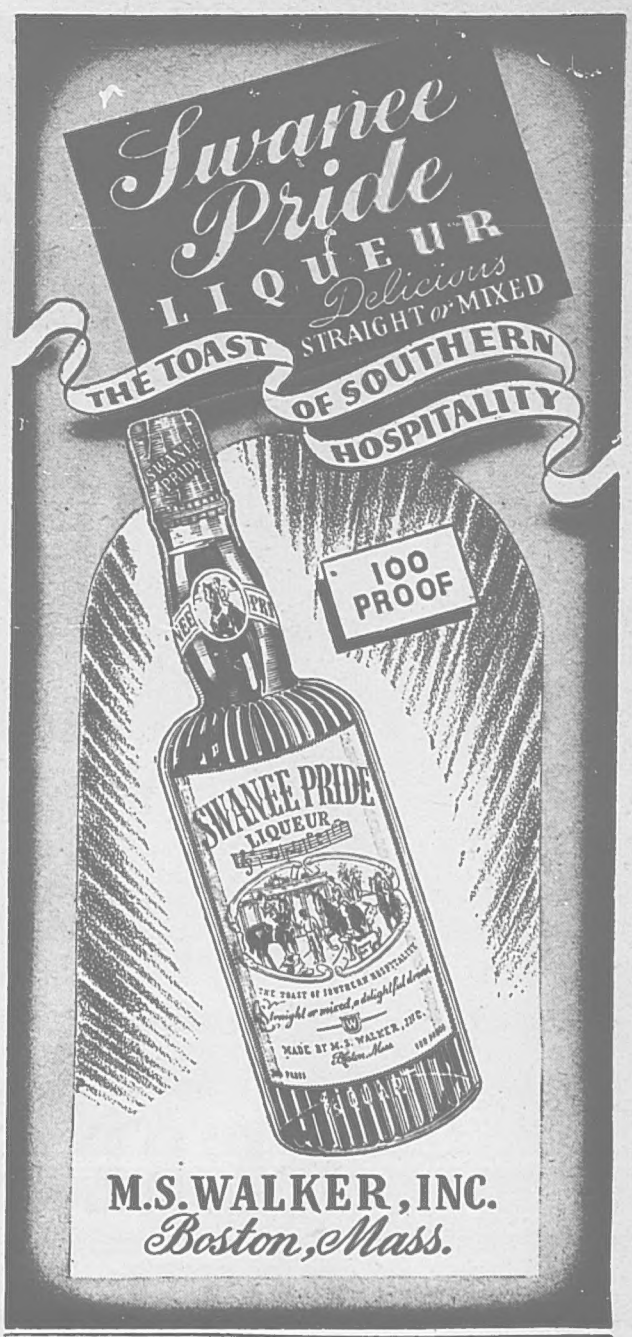
She returned to the phone.

"All right, sir," she said happily. "I'll be ready. What's that? Pedigo and Shorty too? Cripes! I hate to associate with 'em, commandant, but orders is orders. Aye-aye, sir."

For five minutes after she hung up, Bessie studied the mounted bass over the bar mirror. Then she dialed a number.

"Hello—Doc?" she inquired. "Say, Doc—what's a cituation?"

THE END



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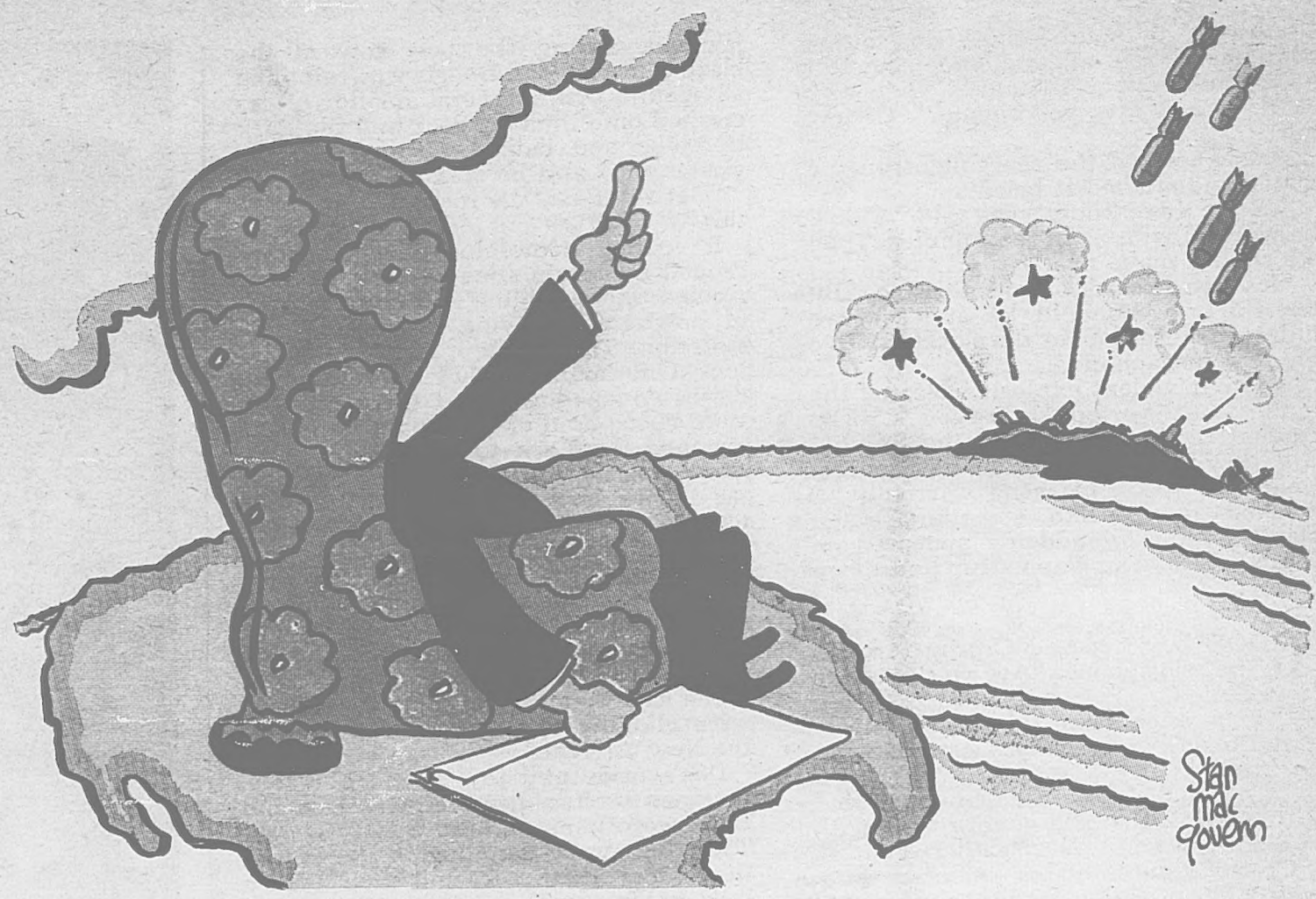

WE'RE FIGHTING BOTH WARS AT ONCE

PERHAPS it's not too late to make a comment or two concerning an argument that raged with considerable heat a year or so ago and still comes up occasionally. Soon after the war began there developed among us what might be called a Pacific or "hit the Japs first" school of thought. Adherents of this school wanted us to let the European end of the war rest, including lend-lease, while we concentrated all available power against the Japs. We were exhorted, for Goshsakes, to "give MacArthur what he needs" before the Nips grew so strong on their ill-gotten gains that defeating them became a long or impossible task.

Now is as good a time as any to wonder if those who wasted breath and ink in such dire forebodings of disaster unless their advice was followed have since drawn any lesson from the actual working out of events.

As it developed, we could fight neither war adequately until the weapons suitable for each were ready. We could not fight on the necessary scale in Europe until we had assembled abroad and made ready for action a vast array of men and mechanized equipment.

We could not carry the war to the Japanese without greatly increased Naval strength, chiefly in aircraft carriers. Until this strength was ready it was idle to talk of launching full-scale attacks. We could only hold. Had we sent MacArthur "what he needed" he couldn't have used it anyway, and if he tried probably would have met disaster in the process.

What we did do was prepare weapons suitable for each war in the shortest possible space of time. When they were ready we put them to use. The results are being written in the day-by-day headlines. As it turned out, we seem to have acquired first the necessary striking power of the type needed in the Pacific.

The moral to be drawn from all this, if any there be, is that we could save ourselves a lot of effort and bewilderment if we all stopped trying to be experts on matters about which we know little or nothing. The fighting of our dual wars must rest of necessity in the hands of the admirals and generals. They know what the score is and we don't. They're bound to make some mistakes, but all we can do is pray none are serious. So far, we have little to complain about.

Tilting at straw men is a great American pastime, but when such serious affairs are afoot in the world it seems a little silly.

Paul Hunter

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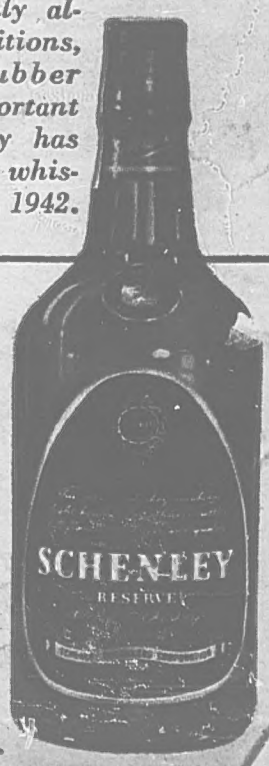

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